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PAUL IN EVERYDAY LIFE

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SECTION I.

Epistles to the Corinthians

Sunday, First Week, 1 Cor. 1:1-9.

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, 2 unto the church of God which is at Corinth, even them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, their Lord and ours: 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus; 5 that in everything ye were enriched in him, in all utterance and all knowledge; 6 even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: 7 so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ; 8 who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye be unreprovable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, through whom ye were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Saint Paul had received letters from some of the Christians in Corinth which revealed a most unfortunate state of affairs in the Church there. There was strife, and there were moral lapses.

The Apostle, in seeking to write of the situation, begins by emphasizing his relation to the Church. He is not an officious person. He is an apostle of Christ by the will of God. And he is not an arrogant man, for he shares his spiritual authority with Sosthenes. He is not seeking solitary distinction. He simply longs with the boldness of Divine authority, and the lowliness of Christian comradeship, to serve the Church of Christ.

The Apostle gives some of the marks of a true church:

(1) The sanctified, those who are surrendered to Christ, forgiven, and possessed by the Spirit.
(2) Those who are progressing in holiness.
(3) Those who are catholic in their Christian sympathies.
(4) The bond of unity between Christians: "our Lord both theirs and ours."

Divine Master, may I be a true member of Thy Holy Church, and a true worker, also. Make me fearless and lowly, loving and strong.

Monday, First Week, 1 Cor. 1:10-17.

10 Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 11 For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them that are of the household of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. 12 Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. 13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul? 14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, save Crispus and Gaius; 15 lest any man should say that ye were baptized into my name. 16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. 17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void.

There were divisions in the Church. Some were for Paul, others for Apollos, others for Peter, and yet others for Christ. That is to say, some of the members of the Corinthian Church were tempted to lose sight of Christ, in their enthusiasm for preachers; while some others were tempted to have contempt for preachers in their possession of Christ. These two temptations are with us still.

All divisions among Christians are based upon false emphasis. Saint Paul did not minimize the importance of baptism. He simply was careful to keep the emphasis of his ministry in line with the mind of Christ.

Teach me, Lord Jesus, to give Thee the supreme place in

Thy Church. May I never eclipse Thy presence by my devotion to Thy servants, and may my sense of Thy nearness not obscure to my eyes the true function of Thy servants.

Tuesday, First Week, 1 Cor. 1:18-22.

18 For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written.

I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
And the discernment of the discerning will I bring to nought.

20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe. 22 Seeing that Jews ask for signs, and Greeks seek after wisdom:

It is a marvelous asset in life to have a clear view of what one's work really is. The apostle Paul had the power that came from definiteness of purpose and simplicity of method. It enabled him to leave his reputation absolutely in the hands of God. He was unmoved when men spoke of his message as foolishness.

The appeal to pure reason is not enough in order to reach lives with Christ's message, because there is so much more than reason in human personality, which has to be influenced before decisions are made. And there are elements in personality even more difficult to move than reason. And when these are influenced they wonderfully affect reason. We are learning more and more every day that intellect is very far from being everything in religious apprehension.

Wednesday, First Week, 1 Cor. 1:23-31.

23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling-block, and unto Gentiles foolishness; 24 but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For behold your calling, brethren, that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble,

are called: 27 but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong; 28 and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, yea and the things that are not, that he might bring to nought the things that are: 29 that no flesh should glory before God. 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption: 31 that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

The fact of Christ being the power of God is indicated by the triumphs of His Church, and by the spiritual experience of believers. That type of Christian consciousness born of fellowship with Christ in His passion and risen life is the richest, the deepest, the truest to the apostolic conception of Christian experience.

Saint Paul says not many wise men are called. Why? Is it not because they are supremely tempted to give intellect the absolute right of way in their lives without realizing that life contains more than intellect? Faith has rights, and those rights are recognized in other directions in human affairs. Faith is an instinct, not contrary to pure reason, but beyond it. Some great minds forget to let that faith faculty which they allow a place in other decisions have its legitimate place in religion.

Thursday, First Week, 1 Cor. 2:1-5.

1 And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

The thought here is that the method of approach to those who are not Christians is by declaring a testimony regarding Christ and His cross. It is not so much the making of an argument as a statement of a fact, de-

livered in simple language and with a deep sense of human frailty, but at the same time in the strong assurance that the Divine Spirit is using it for the establishing of the faith of men.

The ability to win others to Christ, the apostle declares, is not in the posession of great mental gifts, but rather in a strong faith that the Holy Spirit will use the message of the story of the cross of Christ. The least accomplished may be greatly used of the Spirit if they have faith.

Divine Spirit, I would trust Thee this day to use me, as I speak of Jesus to some life, to bless my words, weak and faltering though they may be. May I judge the result, not by my feelings, but according to Thy promise.

Friday, First Week, 1 Cor 2:6-12.

6 We speak wisdom, however, among them that are full-grown: yet a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nought: 7 but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory; 8 which none of the rulers of this world hath known: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory: 9 but as it is written,

Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not,
And which entered not into the heart of man,
Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him.

10 But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. 12 But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God.

There is a spiritual wisdom which becomes the possession of those who are living in obedience to the Divine Spirit. There is a perception of truth which does not come from books, a direct illumination which teaches one more in a day of eager listening to the inner voice than the teaching of the schools can give in many days. Besides it is a wisdom which becomes part of the working capital of the daily life. It is a wisdom which may be shared with other Chris-

tians for their comfort and inspiration because it comes directly out of the victories of common life.

Teach me, Divine Spirit, this heavenly wisdom, the knowledge which comes to me as I yield myself to Thy will. May I share it with others, and thus make it more and more my own.

Saturday, First Week, 1 Cor. 2:13-16.

13 Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words. 14 Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged. 15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man. 16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

The truths of which Christians speak and which have been taught them by the Spirit have not come to them through mere reasoning. They are the result of the spiritual vision of obedient souls. Without obedience it is impossible to discern what the Spirit has to teach. Study cannot do it alone. And should there not be more conversation among Christians concerning those things which the Spirit has taught?

Surely it is a great lack in our friendships if we can speak of everything else that is real to us, and yet be embarrassed, or misunderstood, when we venture to speak with simplicity and modesty of the greatest facts in experience.

Divine Master, may I learn to share with my friends what Thou art teaching me. Help me to conquer my feelings, that I may bring help and cheer to others.

Sunday, Second Week, 1 Cor. 3:1-8.

1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet able to bear it: nay, not even now are ye able; 3 for ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the

manner of men? 4 For when one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not men? 5 What then is Apollos? and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed; and each as the Lord gave to him. 6 I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.

When Christians live in the spirit of envy and strife they are expressing their baser selves. The spiritual life is being arrested in its development. And consequently they are not able to receive truth that belongs to mature souls. They remair in a spiritual infancy and have to be treated as infants.

The over-emphasis of the human instruments in the work of God is a part of spiritual childishness. And it obscures the divine Worker who alone gives all human effort its effectiveness. And all over-emphasis of the human is dishonoring to God.

Heavenly Father, keep me this day from going backward into spiritual childishness. May my life go from strength to strength and thus be enabled to discern Thy work and place in all human achievements.

Monday, Second Week, 1 Cor. 3:9-15.

9 For we are God's fellow-workers: ye are God's husbandry, God's building.
10 According to the grace of God which was given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder I laid a foundation: and another buildeth thereon. But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 But if any man buildeth on the foundation gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work shall abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire.

God is the supreme worker. The plans are His. The power is His. He has laid the foundation upon which all

true Christian work must be built, and that foundation is Christ.

And there are two kinds of building upon the foundation, that which is in fellowship with the Spirit of God under His direction, and that which is merely one's own efforts. The one is gold, silver, precious stones. The other is wood, hay, stubble.

And all work is tested. Only that which is inspired, directed and capitalized by the Divine Spirit survives. All that is inspired by mere ambition and self-will, and rivalry, must perish. And are we not conscious that all work which has not the right motive perishes even before the judgment-seat of our own conscience?

Tuesday, Second Week, 1 Cor. 3:16-23.

16 Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 17 If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye.

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man thinketh that he is wise among you in this world, let him become a fool, that he may become wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He that taketh the wise in their craftiness: 20 and again, The Lord knoweth the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain. 21 Wherefore let no one glory in men. For all things are yours; 22 whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; 23 and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

To injure one's own life physically, mentally, or spiritually is to impair God's opportunity of expression through a personality.

We owe it to the Divine Spirit to keep our complex being in that condition which shall be an effective channel of His will. Care of the physical body is no trifle since it is a means by which God reveals Himself. The habit of mental concentration is necessary in order that the mind should be a conductor of the Spirit's purpose.

Human life is God's opportunity. And we must learn to see God in it. If we are letting God have His way in us, we shall be able to see Him having His way in others. And to see God expressing Himself through another life is the most beautiful sight in the world.

Lord, may my eyes be wide open to see Thee in the lives about me. Teach me to trace events back to Thee. And may this vision come to me as I yield my own personality to Thy plan.

Wednesday, Second Week, 1 Cor. 4:1-8.

1 Let a man so account of us as of ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Here, moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. 3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. 4 For I know nothing against myself; yet am I not hereby justified: But he that judgeth me is the Lord. 5 Wherefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall each man have his praise from God.

6 Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other. 7 For who maketh thee to differ? and what has thou that thou didst not receive? but if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? 8 Already are ye filled, already ye are become rich, ye have come to reign without us; yea and I would that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

There are various ways in which one may be independent of the criticisms of others. Some are too careless to care. Others are too haughty to care. But the servant of Christ is independent of criticism because he brings his inner and outer life before the judgment-seat of his Master. And when one is living in the companionship of Christ he will never be greatly moved by the criticism of his fellows. To live under the judgment of Christ means freedom from introspection and from the fear of men.

Blessed Master, may I be so completely Thine in thought and life that I shall be free from self-consciousness and from the dominion of the world. I would this day rejoice in the liberty wherewith Thou dost make me free.

Thursday, Second Week, 1 Cor. 4:9-16.

9 For, I think, God hath set forth us the apostles last

of all, as men doomed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, both to angels and men. 10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye have glory, but we have dishonor. 11 Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; 12 and we toil, working with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; 13 being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things, even until now.

14 I write not these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. 15 For though ye have ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I begat you through the gospel. 16 I beseech you therefore, be ye imitators of me.

There is a great difference between the lives of some workers and those among whom they work; the workers, with no obligation to work save the love of God in their hearts, living lives of complete self-sacrifice, sometimes misunderstood and misrepresented, keeping on in unabated enthusiasm, while those for whom they toil live in easy, satisfied indifference.

That was the story of Saint Paul's experience and it is true of some of Christ's servants to-day. And it is a glorious triumph for the grace of God in human hearts when disinterested love is not chilled into mere calculating service, but continues in fresh, joyous, unwearied efforts.

Divine Master, keep me from becoming chilled by the easy, self-satisfied living of those for whom I labor. May I not withdraw my enthusiasm for service because it meets with indifferent response. Save me from all forms of cynicism through abiding fellowship with Thyself.

Friday, Second Week, 1 Cor. 4:17-21.

17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church. 18 Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you. 19 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will; and I will know, not the word of them that are puffed up, but the power. 20 For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power. 21 What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

It is of great service to hear testimony concerning conspicious self-sacrifice. We do not hear enough about it. The literature where it is to be found is not sufficiently brought before our young people. Modern missionary biography reveals it with dramatic power. And it is a needed tonic against softness, self-seeking, and complaint in life. And it is the lack, in an indolent life, of contrasting his behavior with heroic characters which gives rise to conceit. The man who is puffed up measures his life by the wrong standards.

Heavenly Father, I would this day bring my life into the presence of some of Thy servants who counted not their lives dear unto themselves that they might do Thy holy will. May the contrast between their lives and mine lead me to give myself anew in sacrificial service to Christ.

Saturday, Second Week, 1 Cor. 5:1-8.

1 It is actually reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles, that one of you hath his father's wife. 2 And ye are puffed up, and did not rather mourn, that he that had done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged him that hath so wrought this thing, 4 in the name of our Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. 6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? 7 Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened. For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ: 8 wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Purity of life was a condition of the Christian fellowship even when the members of the Church were just emerging from pagan civilization. How much more after centuries of Christianity must purity be the watchword of Christian character.

The thought and conduct of Christians must be beyond the practice of the times in which they live. They must be the educators of the social conscience. For they are

the pioneers of progress.

Therefore the Church must stand for the highest. If she does not, then she has ceased to fulfill her mission, she has really no place in a community.

Sunday, Third Week, 1 Cor. 5:9-13.

9 I wrote unto you in my epistle to have no company with fornicators; 10 not at all meaning with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous and extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world: 11 but as it is, I wrote unto you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no, not to eat. 12 For what have I to do with judging them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? 13 But them that are without God judgeth. Put away the wicked man from among yourselves.

The follower of Christ must not only be true in his personal character, he must also be sound in his associations. To choose as one's close friends those who are out of sympathy with spiritual living must mean the suppression of what is most real to one. Companionship in the true sense means the sharing of what is of deepest interest. And unless there is sympathy in the things of Christ one is tempted to be silent in his testimony and, at the same time, he is deprived of a great means of inspiration

Monday, Third Week, 1 Cor. 6:1-8.

1 Dare any of you, having a matter against his neighbor, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? 2 Or know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more, things that pertain to this life? 4 If then ye have to judge things pertaining to this life, do ye set them to judge who are of no account in the church? 5 I say this to move you to shame. What, cannot there be found among you one wise man who shall be able to decide between his brethren, 6 but brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers? 7 Nay, already it is altogether a defect in you, that ye have lawsuits one with another. Why not rather take wrong? Why not rather be de-

frauded? 8 Nay, but ye yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.

To bring a matter before the courts in a Christian country is not the same as members of a Christian church bringing disputes before a heathen judiciary. But even in a Christian land the courts should be the last place of appeal. Where the Christian spirit exists there are very many ways to settle problems. The Christian spirit itself settles many otherwise difficult situations.

Teach me, O my Master, to remember that I have sacred duties as well as rights in my life and lot. Give me the humble, self-effacing spirit which conquers by surrender.

Tuesday, Third Week, 1 Cor. 6:9-14.

9 Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.

12 All things are lawful for me; but not all things are expedient. All things are lawful for me; but I will not be brought under the power of any. 13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall bring to nought both it and them. But the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body: 14 and God both raised the Lord and will raise up us through his power.

It is the glory of the Gospel that Christ can cleanse the most sinful soul. His forgiving grace can absolve the worst man who ever lived if he comes in penitent faith. Such may be washed. And the Divine Spirit will begin the process of sanctification.

Salvation is an act and a process. Faith, not feeling, not trying to do better, but simple trust in the Saviour and His promise, brings forgiveness. Obedience to the voice of the indwelling Spirit day by day is the way of spiritual growth.

Heavenly Father, I thank Thee for the story of Thy forgiving love in Christ; and that my shortcomings, mistakes,

and sins need not keep me from Thy presence. Help me with confidence to believe that I am Thine, and therefore, in gratitude, to give my life to Thy service.

Wednesday, Third Week, 1 Cor. 6:15-20.

15 Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ; shall I then take away the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot? God forbid. 16 Or know ye not that he that is joined to a harlot is one body? for, The twain, saith he, shall become one flesh. 17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. 18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 19 Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; 20 for ye were bought with a price; glorify God therefore in your body.

All through the Bible God insists upon the consecration of the body. For the body belongs to the Divine Spirit. It is His channel of expression. Impurity is the lowest possible degradation of the temple of the Holy Ghost. Christ gave Himself, not only for the redemption of the soul, but for the redemption of the mind and body. And God cannot be glorified in the body in the Christian sense unless He is also glorified in the mind. Mental concentration is the highway of the Spirit. And it is along that road He travels to the conquest of the bodily life.

Divine Spirit, I would yield my mind to Thee. Thou art seeking at this moment to think through it. May no irrelevant, no merely impulsive suggestions capture my thoughts. Keep my mind stayed upon the work Thou hast for me to do.

Thursday, Third Week, 1 Cor. 7:1-9.

1 Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. 2 But, because of fornications, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. 3 Let the husband render unto the wife her due: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. 4 The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power over his own body, but the wife. 5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a

season, that ye may give yourselves unto prayer, and may be together again, that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency. 6 But this I say by way of concession, not of commandment. 7 Yet I would that all men were even as I myself. Howbeit each man hath his own gift from God, one after this manner, and another after that. 8 But I say to the unmarried and to widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. 9 But if they have not continency, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

The great end of Christian character is to live a holy, useful life. Every one must be clearly convinced in his or her own mind how best that end can be achieved. But the dominating purpose of living for God must dictate one's method of life. Some feel that they can serve God better unmarried. Others are convinced that they can be of greater use, and less liable to make a shipwreck of character, in the married state. But in whatever state one lives spiritual efficiency must be the passion of the redeemed life.

Friday, Third Week, 1 Cor. 7:10-19.

10 But unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord, That the wife depart not from her husband 11 (but should she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband); and that the husband leave not his wife. 12 But to the rest say I, not the Lord: If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not leave her. 13 And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband. 14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. 15 Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart: the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us in peace. 16 For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife? 17 Only, as the Lord hath distributed to each man, as God hath called each, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all the churches. 18 Was any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Hath any been called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. 19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.

The need for patience, restraint, forbearance in the married life is one of the solemn, urgent necessities in our land. Selfish and undisciplined natures are sundering the holy bond without regard to their promise on the wedding day. There is a loud call for the Christian interpretation of marriage by the courts, through the establishment of uniform federal laws dealing with divorce.

But the disciple of Christ, who owns His Master's rule, lives even above the laws of the land. His law of life and conduct is written not on the statute books, but upon his regenerated heart.

Saturday, Third Week, 1 Cor. 7:20-31.

20 Let each man abide in that calling wherein he was called. 21 Wast thou called being a bondservant? care not for it; nay, even if thou canst become free, use it rather. 22 For he that was called in the Lord being a bondservant, is the Lord's freedman: likewise he that was called being free, is Christ's bondservant. 23 Ye were bought with a price; become not bondservants of men. 24 Brethren, let each man wherein he was called, therein abide with God.

25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: but I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be trustworthy. 26 I think therefore that this is good by reason of the distress that is upon us, namely, that it is good for a man to be as he is. 27 Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. 28 But shouldst thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Yet such shall have tribulation in the flesh: and I would spare you. 29 But this I say, brethren, the time is shortened, that henceforth both those that have wives may be as though they had none; 30 and those that weep, as though they wept not; and those that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and those that buy, as though they possessed not; 31 and those that use the world, as not using it to the full; for the fashion of this world passeth away.

There are some things one would not do over again. More light has come. One would not take up the same work, he might not make the same connections. But that fact does not release any one from the obligations which have been assumed.

Christianity does not make light of our relations with

human society. It may be easier to sunder a relationship than to exercise patience and strength in it. But it is not nearly so Christian.

Heavenly Father, help me to be true to the connections that I have made. May I be loyal. Teach me to remember the sacredness of the past, as well as the attractiveness of the future.

Sunday, Fourth Week, 1 Cor. 7:32-40.

32 But I would have you to be free from cares. He that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: 33 but he that is married is careful for the things of the world, how he may please his wife, 34 and is divided. So also the woman that is unmarried and the virgin is careful for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married is careful for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. 35 And this I say for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is seemly, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction. 36 But if any man thinketh that he behaveth himself unseemly toward his virgin daughter, if she be past the flower of her age, and if need so requireth, let him do what he will; he sinneth not; let them marry. 37 But he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power as touching his own will, and hath determined this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin daughter, shall do well. 38 So then both he that giveth his own virgin daughter in marriage doeth well; and he that giveth her not in marriage, shall do better. 39 A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord. 40 But she is happier if she abide as she is, after my judgment: and I think that I also have the Spirit of God.

The apostle says we should choose the form of living which helps us most, with least distraction, to serve God. We must not be weighted down by the baggage of life so that we cannot progress. The objection to the way in which some live is not that the way itself is wrong, but simply that it completely distracts the mind and heart from the main business of life.

Marriage may bring a new day of spiritual efficiency to

some lives, it may be the closing of doors of opportunity to others.

Monday, Fourth Week, 1 Cor. 8:1-8.

1 Now concerning things sacrificed to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth. 2 If any man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth not yet as he ought to know; 3 but if any man loveth God, the same is known by him. 4 Concerning therefore the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that no idol is anything in the world, and that there is no God but one. 5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods many, and lords many; 6 yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him. 7 Howbeit there is not in all men that knowledge: but some, being used until now to the idol, eat as of a thing sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. 8 But food will not commend us to God: neither, if we eat not, are we the worse, nor, if we eat, are we the better.

You cannot settle questions by mere logic. Intellect without heart makes people conceited. It is only where there is kindliness, forbearance, sympathy, that any real good is done. The things that we do are not merely by logic, but by love. The letter of one's life may be all right, but the spirit of it quite wrong. There is a correctness of conduct which is sometimes very far from lovely. It is hard, cold, severe, exact. But the Bible speaks of the beauty of holiness.

Divine Spirit, may my heart and head work together. May they be true yoke-fellows. And thus shall my kindness be wise and my wisdom be kind.

Tuesday, Fourth Week, 1 Cor. 8:9-13

9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to the weak. 10 For if a man see thee who hast knowledge sitting at meat in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be emboldened to eat things sacrificed to idols? 11 For through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth, the brother for whose sake Christ died. 12 And thus, sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is

weak, ye sin against Christ. 13 Wherefore, if meat causeth my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I cause not my brother to stumble.

We may not act as we like, even when the actions are not wrong in themselves. Our liberty is modified by our obligation to help those who are weaker. The question is not, Is the thing wrong in itself; the question is not even whether it is perfectly safe for the one who has to decide regarding it; but the Christian question is, other lives. A Christian's relation to amusement, to the Sabbath, and to other questions, must be determined in the light of obligation to young people and to those who are weak.

Gracious Master, help me not to think merely of my own good. May I so love my fellows that I shall long to help them. To this end show me the things I should lay aside so that I may not discourage my brother.

Wednesday, Fourth Week, 1 Cor. 9:1-6.

1 Am I not free? am I not an apostle? have I not seen Jesus our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? 2 If to others I am not an apostle, yet at least I am to you; for the seal of my apostleship are ye in the Lord. 3 My defence to them that examine me is this. 4 Have we no right to eat and to drink? 5 Have we no right to lead about a wife that is a believer, even as the rest of the apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? 6 Or I only and Barnabas, have we not a right to forbear working?

It is right enough to assert one's liberty. Yet nevertheless, in no boastful or self-righteous spirit, but as a proof to himself of his sincerity, one should be able to point to some things—not wrong in themselves—which he has quietly surrendered in order to help and encourage others.

We may deceive ourselves by thinking or saying we are willing to do it. But when we actually put the principle into practice we see just exactly where we stand. And our life receives the tonic from the sacrifice. But, of course, it is more than spoiled if we begin to assume the air of superior persons.

Thursday, Fourth Week, 1 Cor. 9:7-18.

7 What soldier ever serveth at his own charges? who

planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 8 Do I speak these things after the manner of men? or saith not the law also the same? 9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. Is it for the oxen that God careth? 10 or saith he it assuredly for our sake? Yea, for our sake it was written, because he that ploweth ought to plow in hope, and he that thresheth, to thresh in hope of partaking. 11 If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall r ap your carnal things? 12 If others partake of this right over you, do not we yet more? Nevertheless we did not use this right; but we bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ. 13 Know ye not that they that minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, and they that wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar? 14 Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel. 15 But I have used none of these things: and I write not these things, that it may be so done in my case; for it were good for me rather to die, than that any man should make my glorying void. 16 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; for woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel. 17 For if I do this of mine own will, I have a reward: but if not of mine own will, I have a stewardship intrusted to me. 18 What then is my reward? That when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel without charge, so as not to use to the full my right in the gospel.

The worker for Christ must live, and those among whom he labors should see to it that he does not lack what is neccessary. But the families of some of Christ's faithful servants have to pay a heavy price in sacrifice because their fathers are preachers, and it is often borne with heroic dignity. But that should not be the end of the matter.

There is also a call for workers who are independent of financial considerations. There should be many more who have private means in the definite service of the Kingdom of God.

Heavenly Father, give me a deeper spirit of sympathy for those who labor for Thy Kingdom. May my indifference not make their burdens heavier, but may my practical interest inspire them to larger and more efficient service.

Friday, Fourth Week, 1 Cor. 9:19-23.

19 For though I was free from all men, I brought myself under bondage to all, that I might gain the more. 20 And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, not being myself under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21 to them that are without law, as without law, not being without law to God, but under law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law. 22 To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak: I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some. 23 And I do all things for the gospel's sake, that I may be a joint partaker thereof.

Conciliation is absolutely necessary in the winning of others to Christ. The lack of it in the lives of Christian workers may be caused by mere stubbornness, or it may arise through being unable to establish a point of contact with those who look at things from an entirely different point of view. However, conciliation arising out of large sympathies, and a broad outlook, is one thing, but the surrender of Christian principle is another. Conciliation is the expression of Christian charity. The surrender of Christian principle is the betrayal of Christ's cause. One must walk very close to the Master to be able to detect where conciliation ends and where surrender begins.

Saturday, Fourth Week, 1 Cor. 9:24-27.

24 Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run; that ye may attain. 25 And every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I as not beating the air: 27 but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.

Life must have a dominating purpose. The Christian must visualize the triumphant end of the race of life through his imagination. He must "greet the unseen with a cheer." And that vision of the climax will help one to bring every power of the being into subjection.

It is only the vision of a great expectation that can enable

us to bring all the elements of personality into the attitude of unified obedience. Consequently our spiritual expectation is the measure of our spiritual condition.

Lord, may I have the vision of victory. Teach me to persist in believing, even when my faith is assailed by sinister voices. And may this attitude compel my whole being to render hearty service to my expectation.

Sunday, Fifth Week, 1 Cor. 10:1-8.

1 For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 and did all eat the same spiritual food; 4 and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them: and the rock was Christ. 5 Howbeit with most of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. 7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. 8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

There is nothing so plainly before our eyes as the folly of desiring things which the Spirit of God does not sanction. The bitter story of disillusionment is written in the history of nations and individuals. And it is written in our own hearts, that only what the Divine Spirit would permit us to have is satisfying. There are some tragic steps taken in the name of success. The most precious jewels of the inner life are sometimes sold for the broken glass of mere material abundance.

Monday, Fifth Week, 1 Cor. 10:9-15.

9 Neither let us make trial of the Lord, as some of them made trial, and perished by the serpents. 10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer. 11 Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come. 12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 13 There hath no temptation taken you but

such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it.

14 Wherefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. 15 I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.

Complaining is not only an injustice to our own souls, but it is cruelty toward the spiritual life of others. It lays a mortgage upon our neighbor's day. It makes it harder for him. Complaint is a quarrel with providence. It questions the presence of Christ. It is an immediate impression. We do not complain when we recollect, when we have time to count our blessings. Hurry is a great friend to the spirit of complaining. And hurry, often with much self-assurance, walks right into the way of temptation.

Temptation is inevitable. But the heart quieted in moments of meditation has been equipped with the armor of Christ.

Tuesday, Fifth Week, 1 Cor. 10:16-22.

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ? 17 seeing that we, who are many, are one bread, one body: for we all partake of the one bread. 18 Behold Israel after the flesh: have not they that eat the sacrifices communion with the altar? 19 What say I then? that a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? 20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have communion with demons. 21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of demons. 22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

Our worship of Christ in the sacrament must not be mixed with the worship of the world. We cannot serve God and Mammon. There must be no invasion of the mind, no distraction of the soul, in the supreme attitude of adoration. And the only way by which we may realize such periods of spiritual elevation is by making our Lord the home of our thoughts from day to day when we are freed from our tasks. Not that we might selfishly enjoy spiritual emotion.

SECTION II.

Epistles to the Corinthians

Wednesday, Fifth Week, 1 Cor. 10:23-33.

23 All things are lawful; but not all things are expedient. All things are lawful; but not all things edify. 24 Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good. 25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, eat, asking no question for conscience' sake; 26 for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. 27 If one of them that believe not biddeth you to a feast, and ye are disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience' sake. 28 But if any man say unto you, This hath been offered in sacrifice, eat not, for his sake that showed it, and for conscience' sake: 29 conscience, I say, not thine own, but the other's; for why is my liberty judged by another conscience? 30 If I partake with thankfulness, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? 31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. 32 Give no occasion of stumbling, either to Jews, or to Greeks, or to the church of God: 33 even as I also please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of the many, that they may be saved.

A Christian does not sell his rights as a man. The fact of his being a Christian does not narrow his human liberty. But it is his privilege to subordinate his rights in order to help the life of a weaker brother. He may seek to bring other lives along with him on the pilgrim way, and doing so he must walk more slowly and humbly than if he were thinking only of himself. The consideration of the spiritual welfare of others calls not only for the giving up of some things, right enough in themselves but it makes a demand for a meek and lowly spirit in the doing of it. It is not the giving up of things that some people find so hard, it is the interference with their liberty. It is the severe tax upon pride. There is nothing which crucifies selfishness so effectively as the exercise of humility.

Thursday, Fifth Week, 1 Cor. 11:1-10.

1 Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ. 2 Now I praise you that ye remember me in all things, and hold fast the traditions, even as I delivered them to you. 3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. 4 Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. 5 But every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonoreth her head; for it is one and the same thing as if she were shaven. 6 For if a woman is not veiled, let her also be shorn: but if it is a shame to a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be veiled. 7 For a man indeed ought not to have his head veiled, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. 8 or the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man: 9 for neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man: 10 for this cause ought the woman to have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels.

There was a temptation on the part of Christian women in Corinth to violently assert the socializing of the principle of equality, which had no real place in Greek practice. The veil, in the Greek world, was the mark of womanhood. The recognition of a principle of equality does not mean that the principle should be enforced under all circumstances. There are lands in which the Christian women in our own day must subordinate their rights to the customs of the people in order to win them for Christ. To assert rights instead of helping the Kingdom of God, might give rise to scandalous talk. Tact in life is often as mighty a weapon for Christ as principle and requires more grace for its exercise.

Friday, Fifth Week, 1 Cor. 11:11-16.

11 Nevertheless, neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman, in the Lord. 12 For as the woman is of the man, so is the man also by the woman; but all things are of God. 13 Judge ye in yourselves: is it seemly that a woman pray unto God unveiled? 14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a dishonor to him? 15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her

hair is given her for a covering. 16 But if any man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

Sex independence is not according to the Spirit of Christ. Man and woman are counterparts of each other. A Christian woman must not try to be masculine, and a Christian man must not affect femininity. A manly man and a womanly woman meet the necessities of human society. Christianity does not obliterate the facts of a man's or woman's nature. It emphasizes manliness and womanliness. And if nature has given man the leadership in the enterprise of the world, it is not the leadership of despotism, but of cooperation, of service, of encouragement.

Divine Master, help us to be true to the pure instincts of our nature. Keep us from striking false notes in our common life. May we bring to society the natural contribution of a Christian personality.

Saturday, Fifth Week, 1 Cor. 11:17-22.

17 But in giving you this charge, I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better but for the worse. 18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and I partly believe it. 19 For there must be also factions among you, that they that are approved may be made manifest among you. 20 When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper: 21 for in your eating each one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken. 22 What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and put them to shame that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you? In this I praise you not.

The Lord's supper had been celebrated after a common meal to which each brought his own food. Some ate too much, some may have had too little. There was also an excess of drinking. The whole atmosphere was wrong. Food should not be the prelude of the Lord's supper. It should be prayer, and if fasting would aid in a deeper spiritual realization of our adorable Redeemer, then let us not be afraid of it. Of course, there is the danger of being tempted to think there is some virtue in the mere act, and there is the further danger of physical fatigue in view of the work of the next day.

Sunday, Sixth Week, 1 Cor. 11:23-34.

23 For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; 24 and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in rememberance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come. 27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body. 30 For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep. 31 But if we discerned ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. 33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, wait one for another. 34 If any man is hungry, let him eat at home; that your coming together be not unto judgment. And the rest will I set in order whensoever I come.

We must come from the right atmosphere to the Lord's table. The atmosphere of eating and drinking, of gossip in the dining room at home, with perhaps a glance at the Sunday newspaper, is not the appropriate temper in which to go to the holy sacrament. It is rather in the spirit of true self-examination. And self-examination does not imply morbid introspection, it means a sympathetic appreciation of Christ. Do I see beyond the custom, the outward form of this holy symbol? Do I discern the manifestation of the divine love? Nothing must eclipse the vision of Christ. All self-consideration, or self-consciousness is weakness.

Divine Master, I would come to Thy table in the spirit of self-forgetting, undistracted by the sights and scenes and memories of the world. It is Thy grace that makes it possible for me to come, and it is upon Thy grace I will meditate.

Monday, Sixth Week, 1 Cor. 12:1-11.

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. 2 Ye know that when ye were Gentiles ye were led away unto those dumb idols, howsoever ye might be led. 3 Wherefore I make known unto you, that no man speaking in the Spirit of God saith, Jesus is anathema; and no man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit.

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all. 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal. 8 For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit: 9 to another faith, in the same Spirit; and to another gifts of healings, in the one Spirit; 10 and to another workings of miracles; and to another prophecy; and to another discernings of spirits: to another divers kinds of tongues; and to another the interpretation of tongues: 11 but all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will.

We are dependent upon the Holy Spirit for the true apprehension of the person of the Lord Jesus. Without the teaching of the Spirit our view of Christ must be defective. And it is only through the domination of the Spirit in personal character that we can find ourselves, and our true place in the harmonious plan of our Lord for His servants.

So long as we are living in disobedience to the Spirit, we may be doing some good work, but we are not in accord with all the other obedient workers. We are not fulfilling our divinely intended function. Doing work is not the same as doing the work the Spirit dictates.

Divine Spirit, help me to cease from trying to bring Thy power into my scheme, and enable me to surrender myself to Thy purposes.

Tuesday, Sixth Week, 1 Cor. 12:12-21.

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. 13 For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks,

whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit. 14 For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; it is not therefore not of the body. 16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; it is not therefore not of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? 18 But now hath God set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased him. 19 And if they were all one member, where were the body? 20 But now they are many members, but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee: or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

Our relation of fidelity to Christ brings us into our true relation with one another. In seeking to spread the spirit of Christian unity our first concern must be to see that we ourselves are vitally united to Christ. So that His Spirit may conquer our pride, our love of the pre-eminence, our patronizing attitudes, our opinionative bearing. The primary need in the Church of Christ is a deeper surrender to Him who washed the feet of His disciples. He is still the leader in the great campaign for the conquest of the world. It is only He who can carry the vast plan, as it reaches from the elemental need of the individual to the universal need. The only way out of confusion in an undertaking so gigantic is to keep in living contact with Christ.

Wednesday, Sixth Week, 1 Cor. 12:22-31.

22 Nay, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary: 23 and those parts of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness; 24 whereas our comely parts have no need: but God tempered the body together, giving more abundant honor to that part which lacked; 25 that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.. 26 And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof. 28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? 30 have all gifts of healings? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? 31 But desire earnestly the greater gifts. And moreover, a most excellent way show I unto you.

There will be no contempt of obscure workers, of small causes, when we drink deeply of the Spirit of Christ. There will be no worship of mere human names and no false emphasis upon talent. When the Spirit of Christ has a firm grasp of us all we shall see the reversal of our human judgments of men and places. We shall see every consecrated life fulfilling his important function. The mastery of Christ in character levels some up and levels some down. Then we are not great and small, we are simply faithful members of the body of Christ.

Divine Master, I would find Thy place for me, and I would rejoice in that place. I would be content with doing my work faithfully in Thy sight in the power of the Spirit.

Thursday, Sixth Week, 1 Cor. 13:1-3.

1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.

Have we given love the supreme place in our service of Christ? Have we put the emphasis upon love or upon organization, learning, work? According to the apostle, it is possible to serve the poor, even to give away our means to an extraordinary extent, for our ability, without exercising a great love. And unless love goes out from our hearts there is no enrichment of our character as a result. It is only those acts which express love that have a reflex action for good upon our own lives. Actions without love may greatly benefit others, but they do not react beneficially upon ourselves. It is a dreadful thing to deteriorate in our inner life, doing useful things, while they are not done by a pure love. But it is a glorious thing to grow better, to deepen personality, by doing things in the spirit of love.

Heavenly Father, let me not be content merely to be busy. For I am conscious that it is possible for me to work hard, and yet not to grow Christ-like. Save me from that industry that profiteth my soul nothing. May love be so dominant in my heart that, whatever service I render, it shall react in the deepening and inspiring of my own life.

Friday, Sixth Week, 1 Cor. 13:4-7.

4 Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; 5 doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; 6 rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; 7 beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

When we measure the spirit in which our work is done by the love test we discover how far short our work often comes of the pure motive. We are not always long-suffering in our work. Envy is not always absent. We are not always modest when we speak of it. And even if we are silent, we may still be conceited over what we are doing.

If we were to think over the spirit of our relationships with others in the home, in business, in the Church, in society, in the light of the characteristics of love mentioned in these four verses, it would greatly help us to see where we stand spiritually. It would be a profitable exercise once a week. And I do not think such would necessarily be a morbid introspective act. We become morbid by looking within, but this meditation would lead us in the opposite direction. It is by beholding the glory of the Lord we are changed.

Saturday, Sixth Week, 1 Cor. 13:8-13.

8 Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. 9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; 10 but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know

fully even as also I was fully known. 13 But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

{ Love is the permanent element in life and human relationship. Our love is as busy in the unseen world as it is on the earth. We do not love those who are in the Unseen less, but rather more than ever, and they do not love us any less. It is that attitude between souls which is the language of eternity. Love is the speech between us and those whom we cannot see. "If we could only speak to them," we say. But that longing is speech. }

There is at least this one element in human life which we may carry with us into the eternal when so much that we have counted valuable is dissolved. We can take with us all the love we have cultivated in these earthly relations.

My Lord, help me by Thy Spirit's indwelling to cultivate that in my life which shall survive the incident of death. May my contact with the world increase the capacity of my heart for loving, rather than diminish it. Save me from cynicism, from the contraction of my nature, under the foolish sense of wordly wisdom.

Sunday, Seventh Week, 1 Cor. 14:1-11.

1 Follow after love; yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. 2 For he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no man understandeth; but in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. 3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men edification, and exhortation, and consolation. 4 He that speaketh in a tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. 5 Now I would have you all speak with tongues, but rather that ye should prophesy: and greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying. 6 But now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching? 7 Even things without life, giving a voice, whether pipe or harp, if they give not a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?

8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain voice, who shall prepare himself for war? 9 So also ye, unless ye utter by the tongue speech easy to be understood, how shall it

be known what is spoken? for ye will be speaking into the air. 10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and no kind is without signification. 11 If then I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh will be a barbarian unto me.

The gift of tongues symbolically claimed all races for Christ. The gift of prophecy does not merely refer to foretelling events. It is the exercise of a prophet's insight into spiritual realities. St. Paul says the gift of prophecy is greater than the gift of tongues. Therefore let us be concerned as to whether we have it, or whether we may possess it. The gift of prophecy means spiritual reality in the Church. There are gifts it may be well to have, but none are greater than the possession of prophetic power, and passion and courage. Let us not lose greater gifts trying to find lesser ones. It is a still poorer bargain to sell the jewels of the soul for their imitation in glass.

Monday, Seventh Week, 1 Cor. 14:12-22.

12 So also ye, since ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may abound unto the edifying of the church. 13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in a tongue pray that he may interpret. 14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. 15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. 16 Else if thou bless with the spirit, how shall he that filleth the place of the unlearned say the Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he knoweth not what thou sayest? 17 For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. 18 I thank God, I speak with tongues more than you all: 19 howbeit in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

20 Brethren, be not children in mind: yet in malice be ye babes, but in mind be men. 21 In the law it is written, By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers will I speak unto this people; and not even thus will they hear me, saith the Lord. 22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving: but prophesying is for a sign, not to the unbelieving, but to them that believe.

Church services have a definite spiritual purpose and that

purpose must be steadily kept in view. They are not an end in themselves, they exist for the common worship of God and the spiritual uplifting of lives. And every true worshipper brings a contribution to this end. And in so doing prayer must not only be fervent, but intelligent. It must have a clear purpose in view. Saying our prayers in church may degenerate into mere superstition It may be spiritual childishness. When Christians go to church with a definite burden of desire to be uttered in faith there will be generated an atmosphere of power in which lives shall be changed.

Lord, help me to bring my contribution of reality to the service of the Church. Help me to have a clear vision of the need of my community and to utter it in common prayer in faith that Thou wilt answer.

Tuesday, Seventh Week, 1 Cor. 14:23-33.

23 If therefore the whole church be assembled together and all speak with tongues, and there come in men unlearned or unbelieving, will they not say that ye are mad? 24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is reproved by all, he is judged by all; 25 the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed.

26 What is it then, brethren? When ye come together, each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. 27 If any man speaketh in a tongue, let it be by two, or at the most three, and that in turn; and let one interpret: 28 but if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. 29 And let the prophets speak by two or three, and let the others discern. 30 But if a revelation be made to another sitting by, let the first keep silence. 31 For ye all can prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be exhorted; 32 and the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets; 33 for God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.

The individual should not only have an opportunity to bring a contribution of prayer to the life of the Church, there should be an opportunity for some service in which he may exercise his gifts. The Church should provide a channel broad enough for the gifts of its members.

There is not a sufficient sense of responsibilty on the

part of church members to use their powers for the edification of their fellow members The week night service might be made a spiritual force in the community. There is a supersensitiveness on the part of many that is not modesty, it is cowardice. If we are really to serve Christ there are some things we must do heroically, it matters not what our feelings are. There is no great danger in our day of disorder arising from the eagerness of individuals to take part.

Divine Master, give me the spirit of self-forgetfulness in my service in the church. May I not be concerned as to what others may think of my efforts, when they are sincere, and prompted by Thy Spirit. May I think more of helping others than of my own feelings.

Wednesday, Seventh Week, 1 Cor. 14:34-40.

As in all the churches of the saints, 34 let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. 35 And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church. 36 What? was it from you that the word of God went forth? or came it unto you alone?

37 If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord. 38 But if any man is ignorant, let him be ignorant.

39 Wherefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. 40 But let all things be done decently and in order.

St. Paul was dealing with conditions in Greek society, conditions which must be recognized still in many parts of the world. But some Christian women take refuge in these words of the apostle as a hiding place from obligations and privilege, and consequently great talents are sometimes unused, tied up in the napkin of timidity. Some of the great utterances of a past generation were made by women. The Spirit of God never used a willing instrument more powerfully in the 19th century in England than the holy, womanly, queenly personality of Catherine Booth.

Thursday, Seventh Week, 1 Cor. 15:1-8.

1 Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received,

wherein also ye stand, 2 by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures; 5 and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; 6 then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; 7 then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; 8 and last of all, as to the child untimely born, he appeared to me also.

When it is remembered that this Epistle is accepted as genuine by the severest critics, and that it was written within the lifetime of many who were witnesses, and by St. Paul who formerly ridiculed the idea of resurrection, but who obtained his information first hand from St. Peter who actually saw the risen Lord, we are dealing with proofs which no thinking man can throw down lightly. And when you add to that the great fact of the changed lives of the disciples, their deathless enthusiasm after their complete collapse, and when you consider that the resurrection of Jesus was the soul of their message, you have an enormous problem of explanation on your hands if you deny it.

The resurrection not only calls for faith, but historical Christianity makes demands for hard, masculine thinking on the part of even private Christians. The easy surrender of the historical elements in Christianity may not be so much a mark of breadth on the part of some as of intellectual cowardice.

Friday, Seventh Week, 1 Cor. 15:9-11.

9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not found vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 11 Whether then it be I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

It was only by the grace of God that St. Paul could throw off the influence of the mistakes of his past life.

Without the pardoning love of God in Christ he would never have been able to rise above mere regret and self-accusation for his terrible blunders. But divine grace lifted the mortgage and gave him his glorious fresh start, out of which rose his new enthusiasms.

It is through the grace of God alone that every sensitive spirit, conscious of past failures, is able to forget the things which are behind; and that attitude to the past is necessary if he is to be and do all that God expects. The humble acceptance in personal character of the grace of God in Christ is the basis of enthusiasm and achievement in spiritual service.

Divine Master, I thank Thee for the message of the forgiving love of God; and that, notwithstanding all my mistakes and failures, Thou dost offer me a new opportunity. Teach me in the interests of present and future service to forget the things which are behind.

Saturday, Seventh Week, 1 Cor. 15:12-19.

12 Now if Christ is preached that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised: 14 and if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain. 15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we witnessed of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, neither hath Christ been raised: 17 and if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. 18 Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable.

The attitude of scientific minds has greatly changed in regard to the whole question of eternal life. Even the modern physicist has become an idealist. The eternal nature of a true life, instead of being ridiculed, is becoming more and more a subject for reverent, believing, scientific study. The principle of resurrection is not denied in our day with the same dogmatism as the same type of mind denied it in St. Paul's day. We are living in a day in which science is coming powerfully to the aid of Christian faith in the matter of belief in the abiding nature of human personality.

Sunday, Eighth Week, 1 Cor. 15:20-29.

20 But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first fruits of them that are asleep. 21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's, at his coming. 24 Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. 27 For, He put all things in subjection under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that he is excepted who did subject all things unto him. 28 And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all.

29 Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them?

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the pioneer in the eternal world of all those who have His spirit. And He is clothed with power on behalf of all those who trust Him. He has potentially conquered all spiritual enemies, and it is His present work to aid us in turning His potential victory into actual spiritual achievement in the lives of His own, and in the world. He has, as it were, won the spiritual territory for us, and now our Lord's great work is to get us to take possession of what He has won.

Lord, help me to enter into all the spiritual realities which Thou hast made accessible to me. Show me the doors Thou hast opened that I may possess my spiritual inheritance.

Monday, Eighth Week, 1 Cor. 15:30-34.

30 Why do we also stand in jeopardy every hour? 31 I protest by that glorying in you, brethren, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. 32 If after the manner of men I fought with beasts at Ephesus, what doth it profit me? If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. 33 Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals. 34 Awake

to soberness righteously, and sin not; for some have no knowledge of God: I speak this to move you to shame.

The resurrection, the eternity of Christian character, is a powerful motive to heroic living, while the idea of this life ending all leads to carelessness. Loose thinking leads to loose living, while sublime ideas of human destiny inspire to courageous conduct.

Character knows no vacation of self-indulgence in the life of one who is consciously living an eternal existence. He dies daily to what is base, and he has a motive strong enough to carry him through the sacrifice.

Lord, may the thought of the sublimity of my destiny ever work upon my daily life, enabling me to sacrifice all that is beneath the dignity of a child of God, in the spirit of radiant faith.

Tuesday, Eighth Week, 1 Cor. 15:35-45.

35 But some one will say, How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come? 36 Thou foolish one, that which thou thyself sowest is not quickened except it die: 37 and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind; 38 but God giveth it a body even as it pleased him, and to each seed a body of its own. 39 All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fishes. 40 There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: 43 it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: 44 it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 45 So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

The law of sacrifice is the condition of resurrection. That is a principle of nature. The sacrifice of the instincts of the lower issues in the triumph of the higher life. Out of the common life there rises an eternal spirit.

It is all perfectly natural. We see the illustration of the principle in the physical world. And if that principle is at work in what is lower, surely it is at work in what is higher. There is no violation of nature in this Christian hope. The violation of nature is in not having the hope.

Wednesday, Eighth Week, 1 Cor. 15:46-53.

46 Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual. 47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is of heaven. 48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. 49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

The lower life is the seed plot of the higher life. But the higher life must ever be rising out of the lower. There must be a continual accentuation of the higher life. There must ever be a strengthening of the divine tendency in human character. A surrender to the lower life means a moving in the opposite direction from that of Christian hope. "Corruption doth not inherit incorruption." But Christ-like living has at the heart of it a hope of an instantaneous casting away of the worn garment of the body, revealing the glorious reality of a spiritual body.

Heavenly Father, I thank Thee for the possibilities of my life, as I make my lower nature the ground out of which the flower of the eternal life rises into blossom. May I be so possessed by Thy Spirit that the higher life shall not surrender to the baser life, but that my higher nature may draw from my lower all that can be changed into eternal reality.

Thursday, Eighth Week, 1 Cor. 15:54-58.

54 But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality,

then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law: 57 but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord.

It will be seen by us, as it has already been made plain to the Christ-like who are in the eternal light, that death is only an incident in the realization of the victory of the divinest in us. Death cannot vanquish a true life. It can only add to his triumph. It cannot defeat him, it rather opens a door of opportunity wide. Death has been transformed from being an enemy to becoming a friend. From being clothed in darkness, to being garbed in light.

Divine Master, I thank Thee for the light Thou hast shed upon dying. Thou hast transfigured that which I looked upon as an enemy. It has become the holy servant of my soul as it conducted me into Thy presence. Teach me to be unafraid.

Friday, Eighth Week, 1 Cor. 16:1-7.

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come. 3 And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem: 4 and if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me. 5 But I will come unto you, when I shall have passed through Macedonia; for I pass through Macedonia; 6 but with you it may be that I shall abide, or even winter, that ye may set me forward on my journey whithersoever I go. 7 For I do not wish to see you now by the way; for I hope to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.

Heavenly considerations are not to make people impractical. There is no necessary chasm between the contemplation of the life unseen and the contemplation of the collection, the consideration of the practical needs of the poor. It was because some people forgot the earth in their contemplation of heaven, that others forgot heaven in their

contemplation of practical affairs. But the Christian way is to combine them. The inspiration of heavenly hopes is for plain, ordinary duties and opportunities, and we have the blessed privilege of bringing the heavenly Spirit into the earthly task. The man who has a glorious hope must not have a close fist. He ought to be ready to give systematically to the cause of Christ and the poor.

Lord, may I not gaze up to heaven so intently as to forget the problems in the lives of my fellow men. Forbid that my contemplation of the eternal should unfit me for my common duties. Thou hast given me these great hopes so that I may give myself more devotedly to my fellows. Save me from bringing the contempt of the world upon Thy holy cause.

Saturday, Eighth Week, 1 Cor. 16:8-11.

8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost; 9 for a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

10 Now if Timothy come, see that he be with you without fear; for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do: 11 let no man therefore despise him. But set him forward on his journey in peace, that he may come unto me: for I expect him with the brethren.

Inclination is not to be the criterion of duty. The point of least resistance is not always the highway of life. Our real opportunities in life often bristle with difficulties. One man sees difficulty, another man sees opportunity. We do not really find ourselves until we get into grips with difficulty that exhausts, that makes us call out our inner reserves, that throws us back upon God in prayer and faith. Difficulty is a storehouse of power, and so long as we elude it, we are strangers to our deepest selves.

Lord, help me to see opportunity in all its disguises. May I not fear its threatening appearance; it can be only a friend if I approach it in Thy companionship. I know nothing can hurt me but my own cowardice.

Sunday, Ninth Week, 1 Cor. 16:12-16.

12 But as touching Apollos the brother, I besought him much to come unto you with the brethren: and it was not at all his will to come now; but he will come when

he shall have opportunity.
13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. 14 Let all that ye do be done in love.
15 Now I beseech you, brethren (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have set themselves to minister unto the saints), 16 that ye also be in subjection unto such, and to every one that helpeth in the work and laboreth.

Apollos was probably a more eloquent man than St. Paul, but the apostle was not jealous of him. He let the holy passion for Christ trample down all smallness in his nature. And it is only a great passion for a worthy cause that can crush pettiness in human character. It is because there is no great enthusiasm in some lives that there is such a nest of miserable wasps stinging them continually. The little slights, the trifling misunderstandings, the mean jealousies and envy, thrive because there is no great, absorbing purpose engaging and taxing faculties.

Divine Master, may the vision of Thy work and the enthusiasm of my soul in it deliver me from all the petty trifles which would harass me if I were idle enough to imagine foolishness.

Monday, Ninth Week, 1 Cor. 16:17-24.

17 And I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they supplied. 18 For they refreshed my spirit and yours: acknowledge ye therefore them that are such.
19 The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Prisca salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. 20 All the brethren salute you. Salute one another with a holy kiss.
21 The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand. 22 If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema. Marana tha. 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. 24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

If we cannot do great work ourselves, what a glorious privilege it is to cheer those who are doing it. We do not know much about Stephanus and Fortunatus and Achaicus, but they refreshed the spirit of St. Paul. Who knows what those men by so doing achieved indirectly? It may not be showy service, but it is substantial. And it is only

the life that is true that can be humble enough, and gracious enough to do it.

There are prominent workers in every department of effort who need cheer. We sometimes think they are too conspicuous to need any, and yet it may be from that very fact they need it more. How much inspiration may prevent, how much it may achieve!

Divine Spirit, may I be so continually under Thy guidance that I may be able to inspire some who are toiling in the conspicuous places. Teach me how I may help them and thus do great service in the unseen world.

Tuesday, Ninth Week, II Cor. 1:1-7.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints that are in the whole of Achaia: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; 4 who comforteth us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction, through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound unto us, even so our comfort also aboundeth through Christ. 6 But whether we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or whether we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which worketh in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: 7 and our hope for you is stedfast; knowing that, as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so also are ye of the comfort.

Trial endured as a Christian makes one a minister of comfort. Every life made better by the difficulties and pain encountered in the earthly lot generates an influence which is a most powerful healing touch upon other tried souls. Just as boiling water throws off the powerful vapor we call steam, so a life comforted in trouble by God throws off a comforting influence upon others. There is no comforter of broken hearts like the one who himself has been comforted of God; such are the true dispensers of the balm of Gilead. And it is worth while enduring in a Christian way were it for no other reason than that one aspired to pass on the healing touch.

Lord, may I so live in fellowship with Thee when the

storms in my life are high, that I shall have comfort for the comfortless, and cheer for the cheerless, and light for those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

Wednesday, Ninth Week, II Cor. 1:8-15.

8 For we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were weighed down exceedingly, beyond our power, insomuch that we despaired even of life: 9 yea, we ourselves have had the sentence of death within ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead: 10 who delivered us out of so great a death, and will deliver: on whom we have set our hope that he will also still deliver us; 11 ye also helping together on our behalf by your supplication; that, for the gift bestowed upon us by means of many, thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf.

12 For our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God. we behaved ourselves in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward. 13 For we write no other things unto you, than what ye read or even acknowledge, and I hope ye will acknowledge unto the end: 14 as also ye did acknowledge us in part, that we are your glorying, even as ye also are ours, in the day of our Lord Jesus.

15 And in this confidence I was minded to come first unto you, that ye might have a second benefit.

It is well to let those who are really interested in us know of our trials as well as our triumphs, not in the spirit of depressing complaint but in the spirit of true friendship and Christian faith. Some people do not let their friends get really near them because they never give them an opportunity to sympathize with them, and some children are so shielded from the sorrowful facts of life that they are selfish, and have no development of heartfelt sympathy. Children are not to be burdened before their time with the trials of life. But it is also true that many children would be very much less self-centered and they would have kinder hearts when they grow up, if they had received some opportunities for the expansion of their sympathy and fewer opportunities for the expansion of their selfishness. The children are not to be blamed.

Thursday, Ninth Week, II Cor. 1:16-24.

16 And by you to pass into Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come unto you, and of you to be set forward on my journey unto Judæa. 17 When I therefore was thus minded, did I show fickleness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea and the nay nay? 18 But as God is faithful, our word toward you is not yea and nay. 19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timothy, was not yea and nay, but in him is yea. 20 For how many soever be the promises of God, in him is the yea: wherefore also through him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us. 21 Now he that establisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; 22 who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

23 But I call God for a witness upon my soul, that to spare you I forbare to come unto Corinth. 24 Not that we have lordship over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for in faith ye stand fast.

We do not need to ask the Holy Spirit to come into our lives, He has come already. His presence is the greatest fact in our lives. There are other things true of us, painfully true, but they are all overshadowed by the glorious reality of the Spirit's indwelling. And we are conscious of His presence by faith in the promises of God. We are conscious of His presence by exalted feeling sometimes, but that does not abide. Trust is the abiding means by which we rest in the assurance that we are the temple of the Holy Ghost. And how much stronger our lives would be if we linked our thought-life to that great fact, rather than joining our thought to our sense of physical weakness and weariness and our changing moods. Spirit consciousness is a far more Christian habit of mind than body consciousness.

Divine Spirit, who dwellest within my life, help me to think of Thy presence as an abiding reality. Thou dost not come and go with my feelings. May the habit of my mind find its home in Thee rather than in the fickle, changeful feelings and moods of my physical life. Thus would I live in unbroken union with Thy power.

SECTION III.

Epistles to the Corinthians

Friday, Ninth Week, II Cor. 2:1-8.

1 But I determined this for myself, that I would not come again to you with sorrow. 2 For if I make you sorry, who then is he that maketh me glad but he that is made sorry by me? 3 And I wrote this very thing, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all. 4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be made sorry, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

5 But if any hath caused sorrow, he hath caused sorrow, not to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all. 6 Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many; 7 so that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his over-much sorrow. 8 Wherefore I beseech you to confirm your love toward him.

We owe it to others to be at our best. We may injure those with whom we are associated if we come to them with a depressing atmosphere which may have serious enough reasons behind it. It may be difficult to carry an inspiring, joyous attitude out into the world, but it is part of the heroic program of a Christian's life.

It is possible in the attempt to sympathize with the woes of others to surrender too much to their depressed mood. We sometimes think we show our sympathy more by giving ourselves up to their sad bearing, instead of keeping cheerful ourselves and endeavoring to inspire cheerfulness in those who are downcast. It is a question whether we are more anxious to impress the sorrowful with our sympathy, or whether we are keen upon helping them. Of course there are supreme occasions when we instinctively weep with those who weep.

Heavenly Father: May I be so strengthened in prayer and in the study of Thy Word, that I shall be able to come before the world with the bearing of the victorious. And may I not surrender to the mere mood of those with whom I would sympathize. Strengthen me rather, by cheerfulness and hopefulness, to inspire them.

Saturday, Ninth Week, II Cor. 2:9-13.

9 For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye are obedient in all things. 10 But to whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also: for what I also have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, for your sakes have I forgiven it in the presence of Christ; 11 that no advantage may be gained over us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

12 Now when I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ, and when a door was opened unto me in the Lord, 13 I had no relief for my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went forth into Macedonia.

The forgiveness of a wrong done should be unanimous in a family or a church. It is thus the unity of the spirit is preserved in the bond of peace. We must remember the peace of a family or of a church as well as the discipline of an individual. Unmerciful punishment may work havoc in the life of one who has done wrong. It may drive him beyond recovery. Good men may unconsciously play into the hands of the Devil. Christian wisdom, as well as Christian charity, teach us that punishment is not an end in itself, it is only a means to the end of sound recovery. Punishment that does not end in recovery is a failure, and we are learning this truth in various directions and not least in our penal institutions.

Sunday, Tenth Week, II Cor. 2:14-17.

14 But thanks be unto God, who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest through us the savor of his knowledge in every place. 15 For we are a sweet savor of Christ unto God, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; 16 to the one a savor from death unto death; to the other a savor from life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? 17 For we are not as the many, corrupting the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ.

It is only those who are deeply tried who can possess the spirit of profound thankfulness to God. It is in trial that the deeps of life are reached; without it we are tempted to live on the surface, the elemental man is unmoved. But the spirit of thankfulness in tried souls is evidence to the world of the triumph of God in human life. Such people exhibit the victory of God where the world sees only defeat. They suggest the great underlying spiritual reality which undergirds the superficial appearances of life, and that is the supreme evidence of the unseen world which Christian lives can show forth to the unbelieving.

Divine Master, may I so live in fellowship with Thee that whatever may come into my life shall reveal the abiding triumph of Thy will and power. Help me to show to the world that Thy glorious purpose is prevailing in and through me amid all the variety of my experiences.

Monday, Tenth Week, II Cor. 3:1-6.

1 Are we beginning again to commend ourselves? or need we as do some, epistles of commendation to you or from you? 2 Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men; 3 being made manifest that ye are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh. 4 And such confidence have we through Christ to God-ward: 5 not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to account anything as from ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God; 6 who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

The highest commendation of a Christian worker is his influence in producing the Spirit of Christ in other lives. That is the Christian's highest privilege, as it is the seal of his spiritual power. Spiritual influence is the test of spirituality, and when that influence changes lives, who do not go back, but survive amid trial and temptation so that the world is able to read the wonderful message of their transformed characters, then, indeed, it is the power of God that has wrought the change.

Our problem is to so abide under the spell of the Spirit's power that our influence upon others shall not be merely a passing impression, but an abiding, spiritual reality, surviving the tests of trial and time.

Tuesday, Tenth Week, II Cor. 3:7-11.

7 But if the ministration of death, written, and engraven on stones, came with glory, so that the children of Israel could not look stedfastly upon the face of Moses for the glory of his face; which glory was passing away: 8 how shall not rather the ministration of the spirit be with glory? 9 For, if the ministration of condemnation hath glory, much rather doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. 10 For verily that which hath been made glorious hath not been made glorious in this respect, by reason of the glory that surpasseth. 11 For if that which passeth away was with glory, much more that which remaineth is in glory.

The glory of the gospel eclipses the power of the law. The law revealed moral insufficiency and unworthiness. The gospel is a gift of forgiveness and moral power. The one mortgaged life, the other endows it. The law was a revelation of condemnation, the Christian gospel is the message of redemption. Which are we living under? Is our religion an endowment or a mortgage upon our days? Does it carry us or must we carry it? Christ has not come to add one more heavy burden to lives weighed down, but rather to capitalize character in order to meet fully all the claims of life.

Wednesday, Tenth Week, II Cor. 3:12-18.

12 Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness of speech, 13 and are not as Moses, who put a veil upon his face that the children of Israel should not look stedfastly on the end of that which was passing away: 14 but their minds were hardened: for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remaineth, it not being revealed to them that it is done away in Christ. 15 But unto this day, whensoever Moses is read, a veil lieth upon their heart. 16 But whensoever it shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18 But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.

The supreme attitude of Christian life is to behold the glory of God revealed in Jesus Christ. It is in this at-

titude of self-escape, self-forgetfulness, in the contemplation of Christ that our richest blessings are received. And having been received in the attitude of worship, the glory of Christ is reflected to the world. The two-fold aspect, beholding and reflecting, are the counterparts of each other. There can be no true beholding of Christ without reflecting His Spirit, and there can be no real reflecting of His Spirit without beholding Him. But this worshipful contemplation of Christ calls for some margin of time, undisturbed by haste or the invasion of the world.

Divine Master, I would in the quiet of this morning meditate upon the glory of Thy holiness, Thy love, Thy condescension. May the vision make such impressions upon me that some others may catch glimpses of Thy presence through me. But may I be unconscious of the reflection, may I be so captured by Thy glory, that there shall be no place for self-consciousness, for spiritual pride.

Thursday, Tenth Week, II Cor. 4:1-7.

1 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, even as we obtained mercy, we faint not: 2 but we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that perish: 4 in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them. 5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves.

When we are conscious that there is nothing between our souls and God, having received His forgiveness, and when we have no subtle, sinister motives in our lives, then we are courageous, "we faint not." It is this condition of life, of being at one with God, and at one, through perfect sincerity, with ourselves, that we become the channels

of the grace and power of God to others. And it is marvelous how God is willing to use a life of ordinary ability that is content to be a self-effacing channel. It is self which is the only real non-conductor of spiritual power. Self is a far greater obstacle to the effectiveness of God's power in us, than lack of great ability.

Friday, Tenth Week, II Cor. 4:8-14.

8 We are pressed on every side, yet not straitened; perplexed, yet not unto despair; 9 pursued yet not forsaken; smitten down, yet not destroyed; 10 always bearing about in the body, the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you. 13 But having the same spirit of faith, according to that which is written, I believed, and therefore did I speak; we also believe, and therefore also we speak; 14 knowing that he that raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you.

There is a process of dying and living continually at work in a Christian's character. There is a dying to self-will, to mere creature impulses, a quiet acceptance of the painful facts of life. But it is not all resignation, it is not all negative; out of the process of dying there arises a positive, radiant, energetic, forceful life. And every obedient soul reveals this two-fold principle. We see in such the pathos of humble submission and at the same time the beauty and power of resurrection life. It is this mixture of a dying life and a triumphant life, this mixture of pathos and power, which invests Christian character with elements of sublimity.

Divine Master, I would die with Thee day by day as I accept the facts of life in quiet patience, but I would also live with Thee Thy resurrection life of glad and strong achievement. May Thy death and life be made manifest in me.

Saturday, Tenth Week, II Cor. 4:15-18.

15 For all things are for your sakes, that the grace, being multiplied through the many, may cause the thanksgiving to abound unto the glory of God.

16 Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward

man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

There are strong motives for faithful endurance, for accepting the severe facts of life with Christ-like patience. For one thing, such conduct marvelously helps others—perhaps few things help them so much. Besides, through the quiet acceptance of daily trial, the inner life gets its opportunity for growth. And it is a wonderful bargain, for the momentary endurance of pain or humiliation, to receive, as a result, eternal elements into character. But in order to endure, the eternal world must be real to us, not merely as a distant hope, but as a present environment in which our souls live. We endure by seeing the actual present supremacy of the unseen world over the world of eternal things.

Heavenly Father, help me to realize how many blessed influences call me to endure trial heroically. My neighbor's good, my soul's growth, the eternal value of character and the appeal of the eternal world, all urge me to be true. May Thy spirit keep these realities undimmed before my eyes in the midst of the battle of life.

Sunday, Eleventh Week, II Cor. 5:1-9.

1 For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. 2 For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven: 3 if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. 4 For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life. 5 Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit. 6 Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, 7 (for we walk by faith; not by sight); 8 we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the

Lord. 9 Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him.

The human body is a temporary dwelling place for the immortal soul, a tent in which we live our camp life. But there is a spiritual body awaiting the spirit as a permanent, an eternal means of expression. And that spiritual body will not only be more enduring, but it will be a perfect means of soul expression. The body is clumsy, often inert, but the spiritual body will respond perfectly to all the desire of the spirit. And are we not laborers together with God in the making of that spiritual body? Have pure thoughts, unselfish deeds, glad trust in the dark, not some real part in the making of that body through which our souls shall live in the eternal?

Monday, Eleventh Week, II Cor. 5:10-13.

10 For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.
11 Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God; and I hope that we are made manifest also in your consciences. 12 We are not again commending ourselves unto you, but speak as giving you occasion of glorying on our behalf, that ye may have wherewith to answer them that glory in appearance, and not in heart. 13 For whether we are beside ourselves, it is unto God; or whether we are of sober mind, it is unto you.

The judgment seat of Christ in the future can have no terrors for us, if we are endeavoring to bring our lives before that judgment seat day by day; if we are not time-servers, or men-pleasers, but trying to live, with all our faults, under the eyes of our Master. We are under the awe-inspiring thought of the searching gaze of our Lord now. And as we know how solemnizing that thought is, how it crashes through the mere appearance of things to hidden realities, we feel impelled to urge men to bring their lives to the judgment seat of Christ. Because the judgment of Christ so far transcends the judgments of the world, we urge men not to be satisfied with the verdict of society upon their character or conduct. There is a tribunal, the thought of which should sober every man into an im-

mediate longing to press beyond the judgments of the world to the verdict of Christ.

Divine Master, I would bring my life before Thy judgment day by day. May I not be content with the decisions of the world concerning my character or work. Forbid that I should be satisfied merely with the approval of my fellows. Lord, Thou alone seest my thoughts and motives; may my peace therefore spring from Thy judgment seat.

Tuesday, Eleventh Week, II Cor. 5:14-21.

14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15 and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again. 16 Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh: even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more. 17 Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new. 18 But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

20 We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God. 21 Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

We are the objects of a great love. The love of Christ to us is the spring from which flows our love to Him, and the secret of the renewal of our love to others. It is as we dwell, in thought, upon that love which beats down upon us as the sun upon the earth, that we have found the secret of the renewal of our exhausted sympathies. Let us think much of Christ's love to us, and by so doing we shall be able to give forth to others what we have received from Him. And not only may we translate Christ's love to us into kindness to others, but we should have some opportunities to tell of the direct love of Christ to others.

Wednesday, Eleventh Week, II Cor. 6:1-10.

1 And working together with him we entreat also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain 2 (for he saith,

At an acceptable time I hearkened unto thee,
And in a day of salvation did I succor thee:
behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation): 3 giving no occasion of stumbling in anything, that our ministration be not blamed; 4 but in everything commending ourselves, as ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, 5 in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; 6 in pureness, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in love unfeigned, 7 in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, 8 by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; 9 as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; 10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

The love and forgiveness of God received through faith in Christ are not enough. That is only one side of the Christian life. It must be worked out into character before and among men. Unless there is patience, and purity, kindness, and courage, manifested in the difficult places of life, we have reason to believe that there is something radically wrong. The grace of God is given in order to produce the highest type of human character, and if such is not produced, then all Christian agencies are more or less disparaged by the world. And the world is not to be wholly blamed.

Divine Master, may Thy presence so strengthen and steady my life, that I shall not falter in the hard place. But may I be equipped for every emergency that men may know that I have been with Thee.

Thursday, Eleventh Week, II Cor. 6:11-18.

18 Our mouth is open unto you, O Corinthians, our heart is enlarged. 12 Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own affections. 13 Now for a recompense in like kind (I speak as unto my children), be ye also enlarged.

14 Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement hath a tem-

ple of God with idols? for we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore

Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, said the Lord,
And touch no unclean thing;
And I will receive you,
18 And will be to you a Father,
And ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

How much more we might receive of Christian truth from the ministers of Christ, if we were only prepared to receive what they now give us. Our lack of spiritual appetite, of spiritual apprehension, keep back the progressive message which might be ours. It is not always the religious teacher who is to blame because people are not led on into the deeper truths of life. It is very often because people are not willing to live what they now know, and consequently have no relish for what is more advanced. They are making serious compromises with the world. We are fed with milk because, it may be, we are still in our spiritual childhood. How often one finds those who can speak with mature wisdom upon various branches of knowledge, but they are still going over the spiritual alphabet. They have not grown, and alas! some few glory in their spiritual ignorance.

Friday, Eleventh Week, II Cor. 7:1-7.

1 Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 Open your hearts to us; we wronged no man, we corrupted no man. 3 I say it not to condemn you; for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die together and live together. 4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying on your behalf; I am filled with comfort, I overflow with joy in all our affliction.

5 For even when we were come into Macedonia our flesh had no relief, but we were afflicted on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. 6 Nevertheless he that comforteth the lowly, even God, comforted us by the coming of Titus; 7 and not by his coming only, but also by the comfort wherewith he was comforted in you,

while he told us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced yet more.

The fact that God is willing to forgive and to make every penitent man and woman the inheritors of the riches of His grace, should be enough to make one willing to separate himself from all that is wrong. It is so often the thought that God will not receive him that makes a man continue in sin. But when it is made clear to him that God will receive him graciously, that fact ought to be a powerful motive for driving every base thing out of his life. When it is clearly understood that the best of life need not all be in the past, that still better, holier days may yet be realized in the future, if God is given a free hand in surrendered life. And when a life has reached that decision, he will have a welcome for the messenger of Christ. And it is such patient souls who bring joy to the heart of the Christian worker.

Heavenly Father, I thank Thee for Thy boundless love in Thy willingness to receive me with all my failures. Because Thou art ready to receive me now, I am ready to cast away every wrong thing from my life. And I believe that Thou dost begin a new day in my soul.

Saturday, Eleventh Week, II Cor. 7:8-16.

8 For though I made you sorry with my epistle, I do not regret it: though I did regret it (for I see that that epistle made you sorry, though but for a season), 9 I now rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye were made sorry unto repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly sort, that ye might suffer loss by us in nothing. 10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret; but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 11 For behold, this selfsame thing, that ye were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest care it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what longing, yea what zeal, yea what avenging! In everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter. 12 So although I wrote unto you, I wrote not for his cause that did the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered the wrong, but that your earnest care for us might be made manifest unto you in the sight of God. 13 Therefore we have been comforted: and in our comfort we joyed the more exceedingly for the joy of Titus, because

his spirit hath been refreshed by you all. 14 For if in anything I have gloried to him on your behalf, I was not put to shame; but as we spake all things to you in truth, so our glorying also which I made before Titus was found to be truth. 15 And his affection is more abundantly toward you, while he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him. 16 I rejoice that in everything I am of good courage concerning you.

Sorrow has great possibilities in the making or unmaking of character. Sorrow that has no faith in the love and forgiveness of God may lead only to remorse and despair. The sorrow of Judas was a hopeless sorow, while the sorrow of Peter led to a glorious repentance in the presence of Christ. It all depends upon how real the bond between the soul and Christ is as to the effect of sorrow upon a life. Where there is no faith, then cynicism, hardness, bitterness, hopelessness steal over the soul. But where faith is a living reality, there sorrow produces a new tenderness, a new humility and gratitude, a new trust in and devotion to Christ.

Sunday, Twelfth Week, II Cor. 8:1-6.

1 Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; 2 how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. 3 For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord, 4 beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints: 5 and this, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God. 6 Insomuch that we exhorted Titus, that as he had made a beginning before, so he would also complete in you this grace also.

The grace of God in a life should result in financial liberality towards good causes. It is customary to expect this from those who are rich, but it applies also to those who are not rich. We are tempted to think how much we would give if we were rich. We are perhaps tempted to forget that we have an obligation to give according to our ability even when we have very little. To give a very little systematically, and according to some principle, is greatly

worth while not only for the sake of the good cause, but for the sake of our own souls. And the gracious way in which it is done adds spiritual significance to such giving.

Heavenly Father, save me from the criticism of others as a substitute for my own liberality. May I be able to arrive at some principle by which I shall help Thy cause and may I give in the spirit of thanksgiving for Thy goodness to me.

Monday, Twelfth Week, II Cor. 8:7-15.

7 But as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. 8 I speak not by way of commandment, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity also of your love. 9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich. 10 And herein I give my judgment: for this is expedient for you, who were the first to make a beginning a year ago, not only to do, but also to will. 11 But now complete the doing also; that as there was the readiness to will, so there may be the completion also out of your ability. 12 For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according as a man hath, not according as he hath not. 13 For I say not this that others may be eased and ye distressed; 14 but by equality: your abundance being a supply at this present time for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want: that there may be equality: 15 as it is written, He that gathered much had nothing over; and he that gathered little had no lack.

There are some Christian people who forget that giving should have a place in the expression of Christian character alongside of faith and exhortation. They are not practical, they emphasize religious emotions and experiences and ideas, but fail to let these have terminal connections with the facts of life. And sometimes appeals for financial help for good causes are repulsed by them as marring their spiritual good time. Such a view of the Christian life is unworthy. The Christianity which does not patiently and lovingly come down to the actual needs, and trials and wrongs of the poor is not the Christianity of Jesus.

Tuesday, Twelfth Week, II Cor. 8:16-24.

16 But thanks be to God, who putteth the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus. 17 For he accepted indeed our exhortation; but being himself very earnest, he went forth unto you of his own accord. 18 And we have sent together with him the brother whose praise in the gospel is spread through all the churches; 19 and not only so, but who was also appointed by the churches to travel with us in the matter of this grace, which is ministered by us to the glory of the Lord, and to show our readiness: 20 avoiding this, that any man should blame us in the matter of this bounty which is ministered by us: 21 for we take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. 22 And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have many times proved earnest in many things, but how much more earnest, by reason of the great confidence which he hath in you. 23 Whether any inquire about Titus, he is my partner and my fellow-worker to youward; or our brethren, they are the messengers of the churches, they are the glory of Christ. 24 Show ye therefore unto them in the face of the churches the proof of your love, and of our glorying on your behalf.

It is not common to have a man eager to accept the task of collecting money even for the highest and most glorious of causes. But occasionally a man is to be found like Titus, who not merely accepts a thankless unpopular position, but accepts it with enthusiasm. And it is such people who create an atmosphere of hopefulness and expectancy. They do not depress the other workers with pessimistic prophecies and ill-natured criticisms. They redeem difficult work from drudgery, and they visualize success. They do far more than their own work, they hearten and cheer everybody associated with the enterprise.

Divine Master, may I not only work for Thee, but may I do it in such a spirit that even the burdens of others shall be lighter as they work with me. Teach me to see that I owe a cheerful, hopeful spirit to my fellow-workers as well as to my work.

Wednesday, Twelfth Week, II Cor. 9:1-5.

1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: 2 for I know your readiness, of which I glory on your behalf to them of Mace-

donia, that Achaia hath been prepared for a year past; and your zeal hath stirred up very many of them. 3 But I have sent the brethren, that our glorying on your behalf may not be made void in this respect; that, even as I said, ye may be prepared: 4 lest by any means, if there come with me any of Macedonia and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be put to shame in this confidence. 5 I thought it necessary therefore to entreat the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand, your aforepromised bounty, that the same might be ready as a matter of bounty, and not of extortion.

To have faith in people is to create an atmosphere in which they can achieve what is expected of them. That is often the secret of getting things done. Somebody's faith in others may be the dynamic for their achievement. We owe the man a great deal who shows us the possibilities of our own talents; the man who tells us what we can do, and that we dare not disappoint him; the man who tells us that we dare not fall below his prophecy of us. That man is not a task-master, he is the highest type of friend. Let us listen to him who will not let us rest until we call out the highest possibilities of what we possess, and of what we are.

Thursday, Twelfth Week, II Cor. 9:6-15.

6 But this I say, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. 7 Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work: 9 as it is written.

He hath scattered abroad, he hath given to the poor;
His righteousness abideth for ever.

10 And he that supplieth seed to the sower and bread for food, shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness: 11 ye being enriched in everything unto all liberality, which worketh through us thanksgiving to God. 12 For the ministration of this service not only filleth up the measure of the wants of the saints, but aboundeth also through many thanksgivings unto God; 13 seeing that through the proving of you by this ministration they glorify God for the obedi-

ence of your confession unto the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution unto them and unto all; 14 while they themselves also, with supplication on your behalf, long after you by reason of the exceeding grace of God in you. 15 Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

The niggardly, calculating, coldly shrewd spirit in giving money or service, or sympathy, has its reflex influence upon all such as give of themselves sparingly. They sometimes wonder why so little comes back to them of the warmth of human sympathy and appreciation. But they should not be surprised, they have simply received what they gave. If we give of ourselves, or of our means, simply because it is expected of us, because society would criticise us if we did not do it, then no personal growth or blessing comes to us as a result. It is what the heart gives that really counts with God. And it is what the heart gives that counts in the making of a Christian character. When the heart is right then every act becomes sacramental.

Friday, Twelfth Week, II Cor. 10:1-7.

1 Now I Paul myself entreat you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I who in your presence am lowly among you, but being absent am of good courage toward you: 2 yea, I beseech you, that I may not when present show courage with the confidence wherewith I count to be bold against some, who count of us as if we walked according to the flesh. 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh 4 (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds); 5 casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; 6 and being in readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience shall be made full. 7 Ye look at the things that are before your face. If any man trusteth in himself that he is Christ's, let him consider this again with himself, that, even as he is Christ's, so also are we.

When one is treated with contempt, and his work depreciated, meekness and gentleness of bearing is by far the most heroic attitude. It requires much more moral power to maintain that attitude than the spirit of violent resentment. It is quite true, of course, that there are some

people who look upon the attitude of gentleness as a sign of cowardice, rather than as a supreme revelation of courage. And that fact makes gentleness all the more courageous, for it not only means self-control, but it is also an exhibition of indifference as to what people think. The Christian weapon for the conquest of antagonists is not the use of carnal wrath and invective, but it is rather the surrender of the whole nature to the control of God, who does His own mighty work through a composed heart. Such a life becomes a conductor of the mighty power of God in reaching those who are unreasonable.

Saturday, Twelfth Week, II Cor. 10:8-18.

8 For though I should glory somewhat abundantly concerning our authority (which the Lord gave for building you up, and not for casting you down), I shall not be put to shame: 9 that I may not seem as if I would terrify you by my letters. 10 For, His letters, they say, are weighty and strong; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account. 11 Let such a one reckon this, that, what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such are we also in deed when we are present. 12 For we are not bold to number or compare ourselves with certain of them that commend themselves: but they themselves, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves, are without understanding. 13 But we will not glory beyond our measure, but according to the measure of the province which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even unto you. 14 For we stretch not ourselves overmuch, as though we reached not unto you: for we came even as far as unto you in the gospel of Christ: 15 not glorifying beyond our measure, that is, in other men's labors; but having hope that, as your faith groweth, we shall be magnified in you according to our province unto further abundance, 16 so as to preach the gospel even unto the parts beyond you, and not to glory in another's province in regard of things ready to our hand. 17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. 18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

Even a great man like St. Paul took time to deal graciously with people who, instead of being his helpers in most difficult work, as they ought to have been, made his work infinitely more difficult and trying. It is an appalling responsibility which people take when they obstruct the

progress of good work, and inspire prejudice against good men, by idle, foolish, ungracious words. And especially when those people ought to be the inspirers of the work, which, by their pettiness and thoughtlessness, they are seriously hindering.

Divine Master, help me this day to consecrate my speech to the inspiration of good men, and good causes. Forbid that they should find their tasks more difficult because of my unbridled tongue. Give me grace to speak always under the control of Thy spirit.

Sunday, Thirteenth Week, II Cor. 11:1-6.

1 Would that ye could bear with me in a little foolishness: but indeed ye do bear with me. 2 For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ. 3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ. 4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or if ye receive a different spirit, which ye did not receive, or a different gospel, which ye did not accept, ye do well to bear with him. 5 For I reckon that I am not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles. 6 But though I be rude in speech, yet am I not in knowledge; nay, in every way have we made this manifest unto you in all things.

The privilege of friendship is to speak without fear, to feel that the friend will throw away what seems to him to be chaff and retain the wheat, that the chaff will not be thrown back in the face. Especially when that friendship is unselfish, and noble, and inspired by a holy passion to help, to enrich Christian character. The highest type of friend is one who is concerned not only for our temporal welfare, but interested with a holy zeal in our spiritual growth. And we are most fortunate if we have such friends, to whom we may speak the deepest things in life without being misunderstood.

Monday, Thirteenth Week, II Cor. 11:7-15.

7 Or did I commit a sin in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I preached to you the gospel of God for nought? 8 I robbed other churches, taking wages of

them that I might minister unto you; 9 and when I was present with you and was in want, I was not a burden on any man; for the brethren, when they came from Macedonia, supplied the measure of my want; and in everything I kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself. 10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this glorying in the regions of Achaia. 11 Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth. 12 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them that desire an occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. 13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. 15 It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

Some of the Corinthian Christians seemed to think less of St. Paul, they even despised him, because he served them humbly and with great self-sacrifice, while they were tempted to give much higher reverence to false teachers who made no sacrifices. There are always a few who cannot discern the spiritual supremacy of self-effacing workers, but they are ready to yield homage to mere pompous pretension. Many a true-hearted servant of Christ has had to endure the pang of having his sacrifice in service coldly discounted, while plausible diplomacy was crowned with popular approval.

Teach me, Lord Jesus, through faithful fellowship with Thee, to discern the true from the false in life. May I be ever ready to cheer the sacrificial worker by having a spirit that understands and sympathizes with him.

Tuesday, Thirteenth Week, II Cor. 11:16-33.

16 I say again, let no man think me foolish; but if ye do, yet as foolish receive me, that I also may glory a little. 17 That which I speak, I speak not after the Lord, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of glorying. 18 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. 19 For ye bear with the foolish gladly, being wise yourselves. 20 For ye bear with a man, if he bringeth you into bondage, if he devoureth you, if he taketh you captive, if he exalteth himself, if he smiteth you on the face. 21 I speak by way of disparagement, as though we had been weak. Yet whereinsoever any is bold (I speak

in foolishness), I am bold also. 22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. 23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I more; in labors more abundantly, in prisions more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft. 24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; 26 in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 in labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 28 Besides those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is caused to stumble, and I burn not? 30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern my weakness. 31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed for evermore knoweth that I lie not. 32 In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes in order to take me: 33 and through a window was I let down in a basket by the wall, and escaped his hands.

St. Paul was so concerned for the spiritual welfare of the Corinthian Church, he was so passionately interested in preserving the Christians against the influence of false teachers, that he had to show to them the mark of the genuine spiritual teacher was sacrifice. And he therefore told the story of his own sacrificial life. It was not in order to advertise himself. Some of them thought so. But he could not keep back his story even although they did misunderstand his motive. He was so in earnest for their spiritual advancement that he had to appear a fool to some of them, as he put them on their guard by contrasting his mode of life with that of false teachers. Thus he was not only willing to make sacrifice, but also willing to run the risk of being misunderstood and misrepresented in order to save the very people who misunderstood him from false teachers. Surely such self-effacement was complete!

Wednesday, Thirteenth Week, II Cor. 12:1-9.

1 I must needs glory, though it is not expedient; but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 I

know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught up even to the third heaven. 3 And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not; God knoweth), 4 how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. 5 On behalf of such a one will I glory: but on mine own behalf I will not glory, save in my weaknesses. 6 For if I should desire to glory, I shall not be foolish; for I shall speak the truth: but I forbear, lest any man should account of me above that which he seeth me to be, or heareth from me. 7 And by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations, that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted overmuch. 8 Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

That man has spiritual authority among men who has had deep and definite spiritual experiences which have led him into abiding devotion to Christ. And the fact of those experiences does not imply that he takes an attitude of superiority over his fellows. On the contrary, the experiences emphasize his absolute dependence upon divine grace. Every life that has stood face to face with the living Master is conscious of his "thorn," but equally conscious of the power of Christ. The consequence is that he has a humble estimate of himself, a tender sympathy with human frailty, and an undying conviction of the sufficiency of our Lord to demonstrate His strength through weakness that wholly trusts Him.

Thursday, Thirteenth Week, II Cor. 12:10-13.

10 Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

11 I am become foolish: ye compelled me; for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing was I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I am nothing. 12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty

works. 13 For what is there wherein ye were made inferior to the rest of the churches, except it be that I myself was not a burden to you? forgive me this wrong.

To one who is deeply conscious of the presence of Christ, difficulty and trial afford new opportunities of trust, of resting only in the divine strength. So much of life is all the other way, it is the attempt to do without divine aid. And the reason why some have no real sense of the presence of the Master is because He has no real opportunity to manifest His power in their lives. They try to do everything themselves. They will not allow themselves to be put in circumstances where they are compelled to exercise faith. But those to whom Christ is real find opportunities of deeper fellowship with Him in the emergencies of life.

Friday, Thirteenth Week, II Cor. 12:14-21.

14 Behold, this is the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be a burden to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. 15 And I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more abundantly am I loved the less? 16 But be it so, I did not myself burden you; but, being crafty, I caught you with guile. 17 Did I take advantage of you by any one of them whom I have sent unto you? 18 I exhorted Titus, and I sent the brother with him. Did Titus take any advantage of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?

19 Ye think all this time that we are excusing ourselves unto you. In the sight of God speak we in Christ. But all things, beloved, are for your edifying. 20 For I fear, lest by any means, when I come, I should find you not such as I would, and should myself be found of you such as yet would not; lest by any means there should be strife, jealousy, wraths, factions, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults; 21 lest again when I come my God should humble me before you, and I should mourn for many of them that have sinned heretofore, and repented not of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they committed.

The life that has no selfish ends to serve, that is simply seeking to be of the highest possible service to others can act and speak with perfect fearlessness. It is when one has some personal end to serve, when selfish ambition lurks

in the soul, that studied reserves, and timid attitudes are manifested. But when there is no motive but to serve, then there is frankness and a glorious freedom from concern as to one's own influence. Our influence is in God's hands, but clean motive and faithful service are in our hands.

Heavenly Father, may I be so completely surrendered to Thy will and to the service of men that I shall feel no unworthy reserves upon my life or words. May I be perfectly natural and open, and candid, believing that the consequences of such attitudes are in Thy keeping.

Saturday, Thirteenth Week, II Cor. 13:1-6.

1 This is the third time I am coming to you. At the mouth of two witnesses or three shall every word be established. 2 I have said beforehand, and I do say beforehand, as when I was present the second time, so now, being absent, to them, that have sinned heretofore, and to all the rest, that, if I come again, I will not spare; 3 seeing that ye seek a proof of Christ that speaketh in me; who to you-ward is not weak, but is powerful in you: 4 for he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth through the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him through the power of God toward you. 5 Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves. Or know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed ye be reprobate. 6 But I hope that ye shall know that we are not reprobate.

Love is not soft and indulgent. True love must always be ethical. A mere good-natured, unprincipled, indulgence is immoral. And we need to remember this in our family life, as well as in our wider relationships. There is a maudlin love sometimes in family life which is only a weak surrender to a child's whims, and which has a harvest of rebellion and discontent, in an unmanageable youth. Love that is truly moral may have to engage in some unpleasant interviews, and to shrink from them is not Christian but cowardly. The person who insists on all occasions upon saying pleasant things may be considered a nice man, but he is not Christ's strong servant.

Sunday, Fourteenth Week, II Cor. 13:7-14.

7 Now we pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we may appear approved, but that ye may do that which is

honorable, though we be as reprobate. 8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. 9 For we rejoice, when we are weak, and ye are strong; this we also pray for, even your perfecting. 10 For this cause I write these things while absent, that I may not when present deal sharply, according to the authority which the Lord gave me for building up, and not for casting down.

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfected; be comforted; be of the same mind; live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you. 12 Salute one another with a holy kiss.

13 All the saints salute you.

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

To be faithful, candid, uncompromising with people, and yet at the same time gracious, generous, loving, is the attitude revealed in the life of St. Paul. It is not difficult to be one or the other, but, in order to be both uncompromising and gracious we must live deeply in the companionship of our Lord. To live far above the petty and childish bearing into which our lives are so often tempted to fall, with their mean reserves and ungenerous silences; to sacrifice ourselves for the spiritual welfare of others; to be willing to be misunderstood by them, and yet after being perfectly frank with them, to continue to earnestly pray for them and to commend them tenderly to the grace of our Lord Jesus, is the apostolic relation to men.

Divine Master, save me from the power of temptations which would narrow my soul and its sympathies. Keep the large vision ever before my eyes and may my heart and mind rise generously to the holy task of serving my fellows in Thy blessed name.

SECTION IV.

Epistle to the Galatians

Monday, Fourteenth Week, Gal. 1:1-5.

1 Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead), 2 and all the brethren that are with me, unto the churches of Galatia. 3 Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father: 5 to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

St. Paul's authority was questioned, his doctrine contradicted. He, therefore, vindicated the authority of both his mission and his message. His authority was based upon the direct command of Jesus Christ. The apostle here shows that Christ is the actual general in the Christian warfare; that we find our true place in service as we are obedient to Him who has the whole plan of campaign in His divine mind. St. Paul plainly states that Christ has not given over His whole program to any man or any combination of men. He deals directly with individuals. He puts His obedient servants in their places.

St. Paul also indicates the heart of His gospel. It has its rise in the grace of God. Christ is the historical expression of it. His sacrifice is the dynamic of it. The redemption of the whole life is the aim of it. And the Father's will is the glory of it.

Tuesday, Fourteenth Week, Gal. 1:6-10.

6 I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; 7 which is not another gospel: only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach

unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. 9 As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema. 10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.

St. Paul was astonished at the rapid retreat of the Galatian Christians from their simple trust in the grace of God revealed in Christ. That temptation is ever with us, many still surrender to it. They become confused, they listen to those who shift the place of emphasis in the gospel and consequently lose their peace, lose the experience which grows out of having peace, and lose the intellectual grip of truth from having lost their definite experience of it. For we often forget that the loss of intellectual conviction may proceed from having first lost spiritual experience, and the loss of spiritual experience began in loss of the assurance of forgiveness, and the loss of the sense of forgiveness arose through losing sight of the grace of God manifested in Christ.

Divine Master, keep my soul close to thy forgiving grace. May I never lose my trust in Thy pardoning love. Help me by Thy Spirit to be more and more conscious of my need for Thy cleansing power. And thus day by day may I be renewed to do Thy holy will, forgetting the things which are behind.

Wednesday, Fourteenth Week, Gal. 1:11-17.

11 For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. 12 or neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ. 13 For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and made havoc of it: 14 and I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more excedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. 15 But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, 16 to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17 neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that

were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus.

The gospel of Christ is not an intellectual discovery. It is a divine revelation. And it is a message only as it is first of all an experience. And when it is a definite, heartfelt experience of inner renewal, one is not likely to consult with men as to what he shall say.

The Christian soul needs times of silence and solitude in order to let the grace of God take possession of the deep places of the life. It is just here that Christianity stands out distinctive from everything else in the world. And how important it is to let the distinctive, the unique element in Christianity conquer the elemental man. For it is the cleansing, enriching contact of the gospel in the depths of the soul which is the foundation of all that is peculiarly Christian in human experience.

Thursday, Fourteenth Week, Gal. 1:18-24.

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. 19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. 20 Now touching the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. 21 Then I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. 22 And I was still unknown by face unto the churches of Judæa which were in Christ: 23 but they only heard say, He that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc; 24 and they glorified God in me.

Fellowship with Christians who know more about Christ than we do is an important element in the growth of Christian life and thought. It is second in importance only to being taught directly by the Spirit. We should have both. St. Paul was in Arabia and he was afterwards with St. Peter. The need for younger Christians learning the personal experience of riper Christians as they have lived their lives in fellowship with Christ is hardly recognized as it should be. Besides, religious gossip is not Christian conversation. Few things will help quicken our spiritual life more than simple, frank talks, friend with friend, about real experiences of the contact with the living Master.

Friday, Fourteenth Week, Gal. 2:1-4.

1 Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. 2 And I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running or had run, in vain. 3 But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: 4 and that because of the false brethren privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.

Because a Christian gets his instructions from Christ that does not mean that Christ wishes him to ignore other Christians. The same Christ who calls him to independent action also leads him to consider others and cooperate with others. Independence and cooperation are counterparts of each other. And in order to be a true follower of Christ both are necessary. It is not enough to be independent, it is not enough to cooperate. Breadth is a farce without conviction and conviction is contemptible without breadth. It is independent conviction, which gives kindly cooperation real meaning.

Saturday, Fourteenth Week, Gal. 2:5-10.

5 To whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. 6 But from those who were reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not man's person)—they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me: 7 but contrariwise, when they saw that I had been intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision 8 (for he that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles); 9 and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision; 10 only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do.

Surrender to what is false is not charity, it is cowardice. It is Christian to surrender in unimportant things, to re-

fuse to do that is to be stubborn, is to be a lover of one's own way, and that is petty. But to stand firm for principle at all costs is simply Christian manliness, and we need it in Christian life and thought. We sometimes earn peace and good will at too high a price. There are worse things than a good, strong argument so long as there is no bitterness in it. Some people are so pliable that they lose their mental virility, while some others earn the pity of strong men by their fear of standing alone, while God writes His signature over the life that is fearlessly true to Christ, and that signature is a passport into the confidence of discerning men.

Sunday, Fifteenth Week, Gal. 2:11-15.

11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned. 12 For before that certain came from James, he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision. 13 And the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation. 14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? 15 We being Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles.

St. Peter's fear of criticism led him to compromise his testimony and that of others. St. Paul rebuked him for his action. But the rebuke was administered before his face with Christian spirit and that makes all the difference.

It would be an excellent thing for some of us if one or two of our friends talked very frankly to us in the right spirit about our failings. It is not criticism that is resented, it is criticism that has traveled by a circuitous route because some one had not courage enough to make it face to face, or it is criticism of a mere common scold that is resented, the criticism that is cruel and mean. Such injures all concerned. But Christ-like criticism may bring one of the greatest blessings.

Monday, Fifteenth Week, Gal. 2:16-21.

16 Yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we be-

lieved on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. 17 But if, while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ a minister of sin? God forbid. 18 For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor. 19 For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. 21 I do not make void the grace of God: for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought.

St. Paul knew from bitter experience that he could not be justified before God through endeavoring to keep the law. And it was that consciousness which made his trust in Christ all the more tenacious. This was also the experience of Luther, of John Wesley, of Charles Spurgeon, and they all reaffirmed St. Paul's words to their times. And whatever problems may confront the Christian Church, we dare not lose our grasp of the fundamental truth that we are justified before God by faith in Christ, for it is the foundation of a normal Christian experience. Out of it springs the Christian consciousness which is common to all who come to an end of the self-life, in their identification of themselves with Christ and His cross.

Divine Saviour, keep me ever trusting in Thee as the secret of my peace. May the voices calling me to find refuge for my soul in other things find no responses in me. Give me day by day the stedfast immovable repose which finds peace through believing.

Tuesday, Fifteenth Week, Gal. 3:1-9.

1 O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified? 2 This only would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh? 4 Did ye suffer so many things in vain? if it be indeed in vain. 5 He therefore that supplieth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 6 Even as Abraham believed God, and

it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. 7 Know therefore that they that are of faith, the same are sons of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, forseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed. 9 So then they that are of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham.

Faith is the root of the spiritual life, and it always has been. Abraham's spirtual standing began and was sustained by acts of faith. But there is always a temptation to confuse root and fruit in the spiritual life. While faith is the root, righteousness is the fruit of Christian character, and there has constantly been a tendency to make root stand for fruit, and also to make fruit stand for root, forgetting that they are not contradictory, but two aspects of the same life. Faith does not ignore works, it simply seeks to give them their true and natural place. But when works are substituted for faith in Christ, then the spiritual life has been arrested in its natural development, and the Christian experience confused.

Wednesday, Fifteenth Week, Gal. 3:10-18.

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them. 11 Now that no man is justified by the law before God, is evident: for, The righteous shall live by faith; 12 and the law is not of faith; but, He that doeth them shall live in them. 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it hath been confirmed, no one maketh it void, or addeth thereto. 16 Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 17 Now this I say: A covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the law, which came four hundred and thirty years after, doth not disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no more of promise: but God hath granted it to Abraham by promise.

To depend upon our ability to conform to the demands of the divine law for the basis of our peace with God would be more than a precarious proceeding. Who among us could have peace? Who would dare say he had kept the law of God perfectly? Who among us is not conscious every day of painful shortcoming? There is no rest for the soul in that direction. Along that line we are doomed, we are condemned before God, and before our own conscience. There must be another basis of peace, if we are ever to enjoy it at all. And the basis of our peace is trust in the word of Christ, and the word of Christ rests upon the work of Christ, and the work of Christ rests upon the character of God.

Heavenly Father, I thank Thee for Thy promises, for they have introduced me to Thy great salvation. They have brought to me that peace which all my struggles to be Christ-like could not give me. I rest not in my achievements, or in my feelings, but in Thy blessed word.

Thursday, Fifteenth Week, Gal. 3:19-29.

19 What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made; and it was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could make alive, verily righteousness would have been of the law. 22 But the scripture shut up all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor. 26 For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. 28 There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

The law of God shows us our condition. A mirror does not wash the face, it simply reveals the need for washing; and so the law of God is a mirror, it introduces the sense

of shortcoming, the sense of sin. And the gospel can have no real meaning until that sense has been created in the soul.

It is the sense of shortcoming which introduces us to Christ and His gospel. And it is those who have felt most deeply their condition of unworthiness who most fully appreciate the gracious message of Christ. If we would have a new relish for what Christ offers, let us have a new sense of our shortcomings. Let conscience awaken afresh the failures of the forgotten past.

Friday, Fifteenth Week, Gal. 4:1-7.

1 But I say that so long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a bondservant though he is lord of all; 2 but is under guardians and stewards until the day appointed of the father. 3 So we also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world: 4 but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 So that thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

There was a period of life in which we were under a more or less deep sense of sin, while earnestly endeavoring to keep the law of God. We went about heavy-hearted, not knowing how to keep the law of God, and not knowing how to be rid of our sense of guilty failure. And that is a very real experience in the life of many young people in the early teens. It is a great day for them when some wise Christian introduces them to the story of the grace of God in Christ. When they learn to take their place as the forgiven and accepted sons of God.

And there are multitudes of young people who give no outward sign of their anxiety, who are longing for some clear message to lead them out from inner bondage, introspection and fear, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Divine Spirit, give me the discernment to watch for the souls of the young. Help me to remember that many of them are groping in sorrowful darkness, waiting for some one to-

guide them into Thy marvelous light. Teach me to see my holy opportunity and privilege.

Saturday, Fifteenth Week, Gal. 4:8-11.

8 Howbeit at that time, not knowing God, ye were in bondage to them that by nature are no gods; 9 but now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments, whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again? 10 Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years. 11 I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain.

There are not only voices on the outside calling us back from the gospel of divine grace and liberty, into servitude, but there are sinister voices which whisper in our own souls, calling us back into spiritual bondage. There are voices within which tell us that our salvation is not certain, that we are not good enough, that we have not faith enough, that we have not patience enough. And young Christians are greatly tempted to surrender to those suggestions. Every experienced Christian knows that such surrender means darkness, moral and spiritual backsliding instead of advancement. And it is in surrendering to such whisperings that many promising Christian experiences are arrested in their development.

Sunday, Sixteenth Week, Gal. 4:12-20.

12 I beseech you, brethren, become as I am, for I also am become as ye are. Ye did me no wrong: 13 but ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you the first time: 14 and that which was a temptation to you in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but ye received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. 15 Where then is that gratulation of yourselves? for I bear you witness, that, if possible, ye would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me. 16 So then am I become your enemy, by telling you the truth? 17 They zealously seek you in no good way; nay, they desire to shut you out, that ye may seek them. 18 But it is good to be zealously sought in a good matter at all times, and not only when I am present with you. 19 My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you—20 but I could wish to be pres-

ent with you now, and to change my tone; for I am perplexed about you.

Sometimes people are afraid to trust wholly to the grace of God and they need the urgent appeal and testimony of some conspicuously Christian life that his hope is built on nothing else. Because a minister or Christian worker speaks very frankly to others about their spiritual condition it is surely not to be taken as if he is unappreciative of kindness bestowed upon him. Because those who are inclined to backslide in their faith have been very kind, that should not reduce an earnest man's concern or even alarm for their condition. And such people should not look upon the faithful servant of Christ as an enemy because he persists in being faithful to Christ and to their souls.

Monday, Sixteenth Week. Gal. 4:21-30.

21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? 22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid, and one by the freewoman. 23 Howbeit the son by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the son by the freewoman is born through promise. 24 Which things contain an allegory: for these women are two covenants; one from Mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar. 25 Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is: for she is in bondage with her children. 26 But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother. 27 For it is written

Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not;
Break forth and cry, thou that travailest not:
For more are the children of the desolate than of her that hath the husband.

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. 29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, so also it is now. 30 Howbeit what saith the scripture? Cast out the handmaid and her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman. 31 Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of a handmaid, but of the freewoman.

If we insist upon living under the law, that is to say without reference to what Christ has done and is willing to do for us, then we have no real sense of being in the divine family circle. We put ourselves outside the pal

of the atmosphere of the divine love. We lose the warmth, the joy, of the filial relationship. It is like choosing to live in the shadow rather than in the sunshine. It is as if we would rather rear our flowers in the cold cellar than in the smiling garden. We can do either. Ishmael was an outcast, Isaac was an heir. Faith makes us heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. While without faith our life is a wandering, desert, outcast experience.

Divine Master, I would abide in the sunshine of Thy presence by faith. And I would interpret the reality of Thy presence according to Thy promise, and not according to my imaginings as to how Thy presence should be made manifest. Help me to believe that Thy presence goes with me now leading me into the privileges of divine sonship.

Tuesday, Sixteenth Week, Gal. 5:1-12.

1 For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage. 2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that, if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. 3 Yea, I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. 4 Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace. 5 For we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness. 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love. 7 Ye were running well; who hindered you that ye should not obey the truth? 8 This persuasion came not of him that calleth you 9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. 10 I have confidence to you-ward in the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. 11 But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? then hath the stumbling block of the cross been done away. 12 I would that they that unsettle you would even go beyond circumcision.

To seek to find acceptance with God because of anything that we can do is to eclipse Christ. Our much praying, our almsgiving, our service, can never form a basis for our being accepted by God. It is all of divine grace alone.

We begin to rest upon what we can do in order to merit God's favor, then we are entangled in an entirely different system than the gospel, we put ourselves under obliga-

tions which we can never satisfactorily meet. And the result is we become uncertain as to our standing before God. We do not know whether we are accepted or not. The relationship was absolutely certain and clear when we trusted only in Christ, but when we introduce other things by which to make us acceptable then there are fears, hesitations uncertainty, as to the relationship, Faith in Christ alone is the root of our peace, but holiness unto God and love to men are the fruit of it.

Wednesday, Sixteenth Week, Gal. 5:13-18.

13 For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another. 14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. 15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

16 But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

The freeness of our access to God through the gospel of Christ is not to be taken as an opportunity or an excuse for a life of sin, but as an opportunity for the divine Spirit to have a new chance to control our whole being.

The reason why some people have not lived a holy life is because they have had no sense of divine encouragement to begin. But when they realize that they are accepted by faith alone, then they have a powerful incentive to let the Spirit of God begin anew His work of direction. And it is when the Holy Spirit is allowed to take possession of the actual facts in our life hour to hour that victory over the baser nature is realized.

The practical work of the Spirit begins in the life immediately upon the soul's acceptance of the grace of God. It is then the Holy Spirit takes charge of the re-making of character. And He begins His work in the next thought.

Divine Spirit, I yield my life to Thy control. Control my next thought. Steady my next act. Restrain my unbridled

speech. Put seriousness and reality in all the work of the passing hours.

Thursday, Sixteenth Week, Gal. 5:19-25

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, 21 envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 meekness, self-control; against such there is no law. 24 And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof.
25 If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk.

The tragedy of sin is that one sin leads to a multitude and there is no power of self-recovery. For a life to sin is like a fish sliding into a net, it is held. The glory of being led of the divine Spirit is that one act of obedience tones the whole range of the inner life.

Character is a unity, and every surrender to the spirit sends a tide of spiritual health through the whole nature. The soul is affected at its center by love and peace being created, and at its circumference by joy and longsuffering being manifested. The antagonism of the Spirit and the flesh is real enough. The vital question is which is ascendant, which has the sanction and cooperation of our personality to control the situation?

Friday, Sixteenth Week, Gal. 6:1-3

1 Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted. 2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. 3 For if a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

When a life is governed by the Spirit there will be a great charity towards others, and especially towards those who have sinned and have lost their spiritual assurance and comfort. Such souls are in a perilous position. Sin and sorrow for sin may lead men to despair, unless some

spirit-filled character humbly leads them back into the light which he himself enjoys. There are very many who have sinned who would come back to Christ, but they are blinded, they are confused, they are drenched in sorrow and shame, and they may never come back, but go further and further away unless they can find a spiritual helper, some gracious, discerning Christian whose tenderness invites confidence and whose message inspires new hope for a fresh start.

Divine Master, give me the discernment of a great sympathy to see lives in their confusion and despair. May my bearing towards them be such as to help them open their hearts. And may I be able to lead them back tenderly to Thee.

Saturday, Sixteenth Week, Gal. 6:4-8.

4 But let each man prove his own work, and then shall he have his glorying in regard of himself alone, and not of his neighbor. 5 For each man shall bear his own burden.

6 But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. 7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life.

We are at poor work when we estimate our achievements to be greater than others. We are not only guilty of a false and unfair measurement, but we are resting in a foolish conceit. Every man has his own load to carry, his own problems to solve. And the divine judgment is at work upon every career. Every life will at last appear with the harvest of its own upon it, and that solemn fact should be enough to sober us all into seeing that our own work is the expression of the eternal realities within us. And we should see to it that we leave our fellows and their work to the same final judgment of God.

Sunday, Seventeenth Week, Gal. 6:9-11.

9 And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. 10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith.

11 See with how large letters I write unto you with mine own hand.

We must guard against spiritual exhaustion in Christian service. If we do not keep our souls abiding in Christ we shall lose our enthusiasms. It is one thing to get weary in Christ's service, it is another thing to become weary of it. And it is possible to get into the condition of being weary of it, if we neglect the inner side of the spiritual life, and if we forget that the reaping time is coming. Our abiding attitude toward the world must be that of doing good, rather than of getting good. And our point of contact in doing good to the outer world is first of all in doing what we can for those who belong to Christ. We must never forget that the upbuilding of Christians is quite as important as the extension of the Kingdom, and it is the true starting point.

Monday, Seventeenth Week, Gal. 6:12-18.

12 As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13 For not even they who receive circumcision do themselves keep the law; but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. 14 But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world. 15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. 16 And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

17 Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus.

18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

Self-consideration gives rise to false notes, also emphasis in Christian serivice. The love of praise, and the fear of derision tend to bias men and women in their life, and service, and message. But when we see a life like St. Paul who died to the fear of the world's condemnation, and also to the love of its praise, we are in the presence of a life which carries to the world what it really needs. And that need, according to the apostle, is a regenerated life. And so great was his conviction that he was willing

to suffer for it. His body scarred by persecution was the evidence of the sincerity of his purpose, and of his devotion to the one supreme business of his life. If we have a great conviction then we are ready to make a great sacrifice.

Lord, may my life be so freed from fear of the world's censure, and from the love of its praise that I shall be able to be true to Thy purposes in me. May my devotion to Thee determine all that I shall be, and say, and do.

SECTION V.

Epistle to the Ephesians

Tuesday, Seventeenth Week, Eph. 1:1-4.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints that are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ: 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love.

St. Paul was absolutely clear as to his standing as an apostle. It was by the direct will of God, revealed in his soul as a conviction for which he was ready to suffer or die. And he was also clear as to the standing of the people he addressed. They were saints, not in holy achievement as we usually interpret the word, but saints in the sense of their privilege as Christian believers. St. Paul understood Christians to be saints in the sense that God had an exalted purpose in them. "The faithful" expresses more the outer, practical side of Christian character. St. Paul was also clear as to his definite message. It was a message of divine grace, and peace from God manifested through Christ. So that this most spiritual epistle begins with a lofty definiteness regarding St. Paul's standing as an apostle, the standing of Christians, and the Christians message. And the glorious reality of it stirs the apostle to praise God for the abounding spiritual sufficiency in Christ to make them all God meant them to be.

Wednesday, Seventeenth Week, Eph. 1:5-10.

5 Having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 to the praise of the glory of his grace, which

he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved: 7 in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 making known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him, 10 unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth; in him, I say,

The divine purpose in human character antedates creation, and so does the divine method of achievement of that glorious purpose. Christ is not only the eternal Son of God but in the eternal purpose of God. He was the chosen means by whom believers should enter into all the lofty privileges of the spiritual children of God. Christ is not only the redeemer of the individual soul, but the unifier of redeemed humanity. He alone can unite lives into a true and large unity, because he alone can establish the only true basis of unity in human hearts. And every other attempt to realize human unity, excellent in its own place, must be only partial, since Christ alone can reach the elemental needs of the individual and of the universal.

Thursday, Seventeenth Week Eph. 1:11-14.

11 In whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will; 12 to the end that we should be unto the praise of his glory, we who had before hoped in Christ: 13 in whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, —in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of his glory.

As Christians we are taken into the number of those who compose Christ's inheritance. The ransomed are Christ's inheritance, they are His portion, they are His bride. And to such Christ not only gives His forgiving grace, but the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. By faith every believer may be assured that the divine Spirit dwells within him. It is not a matter of feeling, but of simple trust. And the consciousness of the Spirit's indwelling will grow according as He is obeyed. His presence in the soul is the guarantee,

the foretaste, the first fruits, of all that will at last be given. Those who possess the Holy Spirit are thus assured of having so much more than they now possess.

Divine Lord, I thank Thee for the indwelling Spirit, I believe in His presence by simple trust in Thy word. I would not rely on my feelings. May I listen hour by hour to His promptings within me, as He controls and directs my way.

Friday, Seventeenth Week, Eph. 1:15-23

15 For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you, and the love which ye show toward all the saints, 16 cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; 18 having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 and what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might 20 which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

It is surely interesting and profitable to know something of the prayer of a great Christian for his Christian friends, and we have such information here. St. Paul prayed that his friends might have wisdom: that they might have enlightenment on three great facts: (1.) That they might know for what they were in the world. (2.) That they might know the unspeakable value to God of obedient lives. (3.) That they might know the exceeding greatness of the divine power ready to work in and through them.

And the apostle illustrates the fact of the power which may possess Christians by showing that it is the same power which raised Jesus from the dead. It is the same power of the divine Spirit which brought Jesus to the place of triumphant, spiritual supremacy, which is at work in the life of Christians. And St. Paul prayed that this

transcendent reality might be comprehended by the Ephesians and the other believers to whom he wrote.

Saturday, Seventeenth Week, Eph. 2:1-9.

1 And you did he make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, 2 wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience; 3 among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest:—4 but God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved), 6 and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus: 7 that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus: 8 for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not of works, that no man should glory.

Divine power can change the most callous, the most abandoned, the most wayward, wherever there is a willingness to let the divine Spirit have His opportunity. But the change is achieved only by the grace of God. None can do anything to merit the transformation of the inner life. Reformation of character cannot produce spiritual illumination. Those who are raised to sit with Christ in heavenly places experience the wondrous change through trusting God's forgiving, cleansing, sanctifying touch. Believing Christ's word, trusting His sufficiency, is the human aspect of the miracle of conversion. And ethical revivals have been born when men realized that God was willing to give them a fresh start, when they realized that He was willing to lift the tyranny of the past from their lives. It was only such a message and such power which could lift those people in Ephesus, who had been deep down in the mire, and were now clothed in white raiment.

Sunday, Eighteenth Week, Eph. 2:10-13.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.

11 Wherefore remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands; 12 that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ.

The power of God can conquer habit, the influence of surroundings, and inner tendencies. For a spiritual character is the work of God in a trusting soul. All God asks is the willingness. He supplies the power to achieve victory. The power that is in God is infinitely stronger than the power of evil that is in us. The battle is around the point of joining our faith to the power of God, rather than lying down in the midst of our sensations of weakness, and the whispers of unbelief. God has pledged to lift every life to holiness who will trust His power to do it.

Monday, Eighteenth Week, Eph. 2:14-18.

14 For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, 15 having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; 16 and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 and he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh: 18 for through him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father.

Christ Himself is our peace. Peace is the result of His presence and of what He does for us. We are often tempted to desire experiences, feelings, or something which we have heard others obtain, and we are often disappointed in our desires. Why? Because we have been concerned with fruit rather than with root. It is not blessings we need so much as the Blesser. These earnest Christian people who have spent years of fruitless search for the renewal of some past emotional experience, and because it does not return they think they have gone away back in the Christian life—their standard of spiritual health is an emotion rather than a presence, and obedience to that presence. That is bondage. Let us believe that possessing Christ we have poten-

tially all that we need, and as we obey Him He will give us whatever experiences are good for us. And even when such experiences come, even then we must trust Himself alone as our peace, for the experience may vanish.

Tuesday, Eighteenth Week, Eph. 2:19-22.

19 So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, 20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 21 in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; 22 in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.

Christians are not outside the pale of any spiritual privileges or divine outworkings. They are rather the very temple of God. They are the outward expression of the indwelling presence. They are at the center of the divine purposes. God is doing His greatest work through them. Instead of thinking they are remotely related to the great purposes of God, they must realize that they are the divinely chosen exponents of God's revelations among men. Christians are to suggest God to men, they are to stand forth as centers of light where God is to be found, a temple where the light of His glory may be seen, and the atmosphere of His presence may be felt.

Heavenly Father, forgive us for thinking that we have only a remote relation to Thy great purposes in the world. For we are conscious that in this we are not humble, but blind. Teach us that Thou art seeking to manifest Thy presence and plans through us. And may we so yield ourselves to Thy spirit that we shall neither disappoint the expectations of the world nor be faithless to Thy purposes.

Wednesday, Eighteenth Week, Eph. 3:1-7.

1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles,—2 if so be that ye have heard of the dispensation of that grace of God which was given me to you-ward; 3 how that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words, 4 whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ; 5 which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath

now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; 6 to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, 7 whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of his power.

The price of preaching a universal gospel in the life of St. Paul was imprisonment—the narrowing of his personal liberty that he might proclaim the emancipation of the world through Christ. There is an abiding principle revealed in this situation. A large service to men must ever mean a deepening personal sacrifice on the part of those who render that service. The larger the service the more of a prisoner is he who serves. Sacrifice and usefulness are the counterparts of each other in a life. If we are to be useful we must be prepared to surrender some of our rights.

Thursday, Eighteenth Week, Eph. 3:8-12.

8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; 9 and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things; 10 to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, 11 according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12 in whom we have boldness and access in confidence through our faith in him.

It is quite consistent to have an exalted opinion of your work and an humble opinion of yourself. It is the Christian attitude. The man that dare not belittle his work may have a very modest opinion of himself. God gives to every life tasks greater than his personal ability to fulfill them, that is to say, the tasks call for ability plus the power of God back of the ability, and that power is available for every obedient life.

There is a great temptation to depreciate one's work because of a keen sense of personal limitation, but the Christian attitude is to believe in the greatness of everything the spirit of God prompts us to do. The disparity between the Christian worker's message and his own sense of personal

unworthiness must not paralyze his enthusiasm, but drive him to find refuge in the grace of God.

Friday, Eighteenth Week, Eph. 3:13-17.

13 Wherefore I ask that ye may not faint at my tribulations for you, which are your glory.
14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

St. Paul's prayer for his friends was that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith. And that is the prayer we should offer for some of our friends, who are good, and earnest, and useful people, but their sense of the presence of Christ is determined by their feelings, or they have preconceived notions as to how Christ should reveal Himself in their lives, and because these notions are not fulfilled they never really believe that Christ is actually in their lives. The need of so many is a realization that Christ is with them apart from their feelings, that he stays with them, and that the sense of His abiding presence is dependent upon their faith.

Heavenly Father, when depression and difficulty and unrest would tell me that God is far away, grant me the faith to rejoice in Thy unfailing nearness.

Saturday, Eighteenth Week, Eph 3:18-21.

18 May be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God.
20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen.

The heart of Christian experience is to receive the love of Christ. It is not to love Christ in the first instance. It is the conviction that He is now loving us, that He is

now seeking to express that unfathomable love through our lives, cold and narrow, and imperfect though they be. Just as the source of all heat is the sun, so the source of all our inner transformation, and of its outward expression is our abiding consciousness that there are rays of divine love beating upon us continually through the indwelling presence of Christ.

Sunday, Nineteenth Week, Eph. 4:1-3.

1 I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, 2 with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Where there is a genuine inner realization of the love of Christ there will be a genuine outward manifestation of the Christ spirit. And the supreme outward mark of the Christ spirit is lowliness. Lowliness and meekness are deeper marks of Christlikeness than mere kindness. Kindness and usefulness may quite possibly be in a life, with a great deal of bitterness and self-assertion. The real test of Christian kindness is the exercise of humility. And it is the exercise of humility in life which alone makes for unity. Without the exercise of humility no circle of people has a guarantee of the continuance of peace.

Monday, Nineteenth Week, Eph. 4:4-6.

4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.

Christians ought to live in unity because they have the great elemental facts of life in common. We have a common Father. The same Holy Spirit is in us all. Whether we realize it or not, we are one spiritual body. We have a common hope of everlasting blessedness. We have the same divine Master, the same means of access admitting us into all the spiritual blessings which are ours—faith, the same sign of consecration to Christ. If we lived under the power of these realities which we all possess in common the potential unity would become a vivid fact before the eyes of the world.

Tuesday, Nineteenth Week, Eph. 4:7-11.

7 But unto each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. 8 Wherefore he saith,

When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive,
And gave gifts unto men.

9 (Now this, He ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11 And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.

Christ has an individual place and work for each one of us, and it is our business to use every means in our power to be sure we are doing the work He wants us to do. It is not enough to be busy, it is not enough to do what others ask us to do. We have a definite obligation to find out what our Master desires us to do. In His divine wisdom He has a plan for us and a great part of our fidelity to Him is to be true to that plan so far as we can see it and enter into it. And that may mean a great change in some lives, it may mean no change in some others. But it is our duty and privilege to take our directions from our Master.

Lord, I would not be content to be useful, teach me to be useful in the place and task Thou hast for me. May Thy will control my inclinations, and the requests of others in the work that I shall do.

Wednesday, Nineteenth Week, Eph. 4:12-14.

12 For the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: 13 till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error.

It is only as we take our marching orders from Christ that we can fulfill His plans and purposes in the Church. The work that Christianity has to accomplish in the world can be done only as individuals are obedient to Him who is directing the campaign. But when we are all trying to

do the work He has for us to do, the true spiritual progress will be made in other lives. Christian unity will be furthered, and the uplift of the world will be realized. When we cling to what Christ has for us to do, we shall not be distracted by the varieties of voices calling us in opposite directions, each telling us that the work of his society is the supreme need of the time.

Divine Master, help me to remember Thou art calling me to enter into Thy plan; help me to trust Thee for strength to conform my thoughts, and words and deeds to Thy promptings.

Thursday, Nineteenth Week, Eph. 4:15-16.

15 But speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ; 16 from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.

After all, the spirit in which work is done is of fundamental importance. What good is done by trying to bring about brotherhood, if in the task we are unbrotherly? Our life in service must have the true Christian spirit, and the organizations through which we work must breathe the spirit of Christ. Work for any good cause without a loving heart is professionalism, and professionalism is slavery to a task rather than slavery to Christ, and there is a vast difference. The one narrows personality, the other expands and enriches it. The one imprisons personality, the other liberates it.

Friday, Nineteenth Week, Eph. 4:17-20.

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart; 19 who being past feeling gave themselves up to lasciviousness. to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye did not so learn Christ.

The natural history of the decay of a life alienated from God is a fearful story. At the base of the life there is moral numbness, conscience is silenced. The heart has no true

sympathetic vision. The intellect, shrewd enough in some material things, is obscured, it fails to grasp the larger range of reality. And consequently the mind chases phantom pleasures. A sinful life has a natural history just as a holy life has. The law of spiritual death works just as inevitably as the law of spiritual life. There is nothing arbitrary about it. It is simply the solemn outworking of the law of degeneration as a result of cutting oneself off from the source of spiritual renewal.

Heavenly Father, teach us to throw off our fears, our scepticism, regarding Thy gracious relation to us. May we turn to Thee in confidence that Thou art yearning to forgive and to receive every wandering and burdened life.

Saturday, Nineteenth Week, Eph. 4:21-28.

21 If so be that ye heard him, and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus: 22 that ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit; 23 and that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.

25 Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need.

Putting off the old man is not only a long process, a dying daily, it is also a definite immediate act of a renewed mind. It is a decision which may be made at this moment, and which may have been delayed through years of vacillation, under the pretext that the heroic step would be taken at some more convenient time. So often we tolerate in our lives things regarding which we are in doubt as to their being right, or things which we know to be wrong, and we think, because we admit the fact, and mentally register the hope that some day we shall put everything right that consequently we are excusable. But the Spirit of God calls for immediate action, for action which we know to be right, at any cost.

Divine Spirit, help me to carry out Thy will in my character. Give me the strength to break with all compromise, all cowardice, all fear of the consequences of doing what is right. May I arise into newness of life even in this hour, in the next action, may it be wholly sincere, wholly Christian.

Sunday, Twentieth Week, Eph. 4:29-32.

29 Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear. 30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you.

When the Spirit of God is permitted to get complete control of a life one of the first things that takes place is the bridling of the tongue. Many otherwise good people have not realized this, with all their good works they have tongues as bitter as wormwood. This is the grievous defect in the lives of many useful people, it seems to be their besetting sin. And yet if one will only listen attentively to the Spirit he will find he is constantly restraining mean speech, and constraining generous, gracious, self-effacing speech. And how much our Christian social life needs this kind of speech, out of which the Spirit has pressed the bitterness, and into which He has poured the tender love of Christ. It is this kind of speech which heals wounds and inspires people to be at their best.

Divine Master, help us to yield ourselves completely to the control of Thy Spirit in thought and life.

Monday, Twentieth Week, Eph. 5:1-7.

1 Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell.

3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becometh saints; 4 nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not befitting: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye

know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

It is not necessary to be a great sinner according to the world's idea of sin, in order to have a deep sense of sin. And when one has that deep sense of sin and also a gracious sense of the forgiveness of God in Christ, there comes into the heart a great charity, a genuine tenderness toward others. Gratitude for the renewing grace of God takes the place of fault finding. And that holy gratitude vanquishes the spirit of the self life in its various manifestations in one's own soul. The baser self has small opportunity for expression in a life that is full of the sense of the blessedness of being forgiven and brought into fellowship with God and with all that is holy.

Tuesday, Twentieth Week, Eph. 5:8-14

8 For ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord; 11 and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them; 12 for the things which are done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of. 13 But all things when they are reproved are made manifest by the light: for everything that is made manifest is light. 14 Wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee.

The redeemed life is shot through with divine light. Light is the atmosphere in which he lives. He lives an open life. He is willing to have people read his work like a book. He walks in the light of the Spirit's guidance. Whatever is dark, hidden, sinister, is foreign to the instincts of his renewed soul. He will make no compromise with what is hidden, he has no countenance for dark whispers. He lives in the day and whatever would have fellowship with him must also live in the light of day. It is the light of such a life that is an antiseptic in society.

Wednesday, Twentieth Week, Eph. 5:15-17

15 Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Because a man is a Christian he may not slight the details of life. His large interests, his supreme contemplations, must not obscure plain duties. It is not too small an affair for him to be on time to the minute, to fulfill his engagement to the limit, to so live that people can rely on his word absolutely without anxiety. Circumspect conduct does not merely mean morally straight conduct, it also means accuracy. It means conduct that has the element of precision in it, not the precision of mere mechanism, but of wholesouled conscientiousness. Some good men are laughed at by the world because every one knows they are not punctual, they are not scrupulous in the details of their engagements. And no amount of success can atone for such conduct.

Thursday, Twentieth Week, Eph. 5:18-20.

18 And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; 19 speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

The human spirit must be sustained in a condition of elevation in the midst of the detail, and drudgery and difficulty of life. And there are two ways of realizing that condition of inner elevation. There is the way of the world, the false way, the way of drunkenness, of excitement, of guilty pleasure. And there is the way of the divine Spirit, who gives a holy elevation to the inner life expressing itself in exalted feeling, and in songs of praise. And such elevation has no afterwards of sorrow. It breaks no hearts, it wrecks no homes. It rather lets the sunshine of heaven fall upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

Friday, Twentieth Week, Eph. 5:21-24.

21 subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.

22 Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the saviour of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything.

No one can accuse Christianity of being unfair to women. Christianity is at the present moment engaged in the world-wide emancipation of women. But as a matter of order in the domestic circle there must be one leader, and nature and providence have made man the leader. Leadership does not mean unprogressive tyranny on the one hand, and it does not mean weak surrender on the other. It simply means that in the family life, which is the unit of society, there cannot in the nature of the case, be two heads. Such would mean confusion in a family as in any other sphere of progressive activity.

Saturday, Twentieth Week, Eph. 5:25-28.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; 26 that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, 27 that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself:

The duty of wives is counterbalanced by the duty of husbands. It is not a one-sided affair. Husbands as leaders have solemn obligations. It is the leadership of a great love, not of arbitrary opinion. It is the leadership, not of selfish getting, but of unselfish giving. The Christian husband must give himself in the home as Christ gives himself to His Church. The Christian home spirit is a microcosm of the spirit of the Church and of the redeemed world. The Christian home is the training ground for heavenly society, each member emphasizing not his rights but his obligations.

Sunday, Twenty-first Week, Eph. 5:29-33.

29 for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church; 30 be-

cause we are members of his body. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. 32 This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church. 33 Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she fear her husband.

There can be no tyranny arising out of the leadership of the husband in the home life if he recognizes the obligation of loving. It is love alone which can fuse the home life into a unity. No uniformity of life can guarantee unity, except as mutual love is at the base of it. And this applies not only in the home but also in the Church. It is a spurious unity which is based upon anything less than reciprocal love. And we must bear this earnestly in mind in our high endeavors to make the Church a true family in Christ. So long as there is the air of superiority on the one hand, or the attitude of suspicion on the other, there can be no spiritual unity. Self-effacing love is the bond that will make the various parts of the Church of Christ that united body according to the prayer of our Lord.

Monday, Twenty-first Week, Eph. 6:1-3.

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), 3 that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

When children disobey their parents they violate the moral order of the world. They injure their own nature, they break the law of God, and they impair the family life, which is the seed plot of civilization. Obedience to parents is also obedience to God, it is the training of the individual life in self-control for his place in the larger world. What an unspeakable trial a spoiled, undisciplined youth is out in the larger world! He has to learn from the severe chastisement of his fellows the lessons he refused to learn under his father's roof. How much better to take the discipline from loving hearts at home, and pass out into life with the holy memory of obedient years rather than to have the sorrowful recollections in later life of cruel words, and cruel silences, which are far, far beyond recall.

Tuesday, Twenty-first Week, Eph. 6:4.

4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.

A father who punishes a child simply to vent his anger is storing up resentment in that child's heart. And a father who weakly gives a child all that he desires in the spirit of mere indulgence may find in later years that he has not earned the child's gratitude but his severe criticism for being so lacking in moral principle in the boy's upbringing. A parent's love for a child must be expressed in something higher than mere good nature, which may simply be a cowardly fear of a painful interview. Love is something more than sentiment and extravagant adjectives, it strikes the masculine note.

Wednesday, Twenty-first Week, Eph. 6:5-8.

5 Servants, be obedient unto them that according to the flesh are your masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; 6 not in the way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; 7 with good will doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto men: 8 knowing that whatsoever good thing each one doeth, the same shall he receive again from the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

If the man or woman, who is working for a master would get the most out of the relationship he must do his work not only for wages, not only for his employer, he must do it for Christ. When one does his work for Christ, he is working with the easy yoke. It does not much matter then if the employer is unappreciative. The worker is getting the wages of Christ in his own spiritual development, and in the holy joy of fellowship with Christ in his work. To simply be a timeserver, to work merely to please men may bring a harvest of bitter disappointment, and then, too, it makes one the slave of his task. How much more glorious to be the slave of one's Lord, whose service means perfect freedom of soul and the friendship of Him who can see the motives of the heart.

Thursday, Twenty-first Week, Eph. 6:9.

9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, and forbear threatening: knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.

One of the severest tests of a man's character is his use of power. It is not his actions toward those who are independent of him that most deeply reveals the man. It is his actions toward those he has in his power, who are more or less at his mercy. Then you see the undisguised personality. How does a woman behave toward her servant? How does a man treat his employees? The cruel threat is just as malicious in the 20th century as a clubbing in the middle ages. They are both a misuse of power. When a man speaks to those who are in his power with as much restraint and consideration as to those who are high above his reach he is revealing a merciful spirit.

Friday, Twenty-first Week, Eph. 6:10-12.

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the worldrulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

We need more than human power because the tasks, the trials, the oppositions, in life call for more than human power. We must have superhuman strength in order to face the conspiracy of evil marshalled against us. The reason why so many go down before temptation, before bereavement, is that they have not been fully equipped for the experience. They were not prepared for the terrific assault. It may not yet have come to us, but our day of heavy trial is coming. Have we girded ourselves with the power of God? The newspaper may seem to be enough for you today, but it may be that tomorrow will reveal to you that you need the Word of God, the divine strength, and comfort. Let us not be caught in the storm unprepared.

Heavenly Father, when doubts and fears assail me, when desire for the highest life fails, when I have lost my bearings in the maze of life, when Thou dost lay duties upon me

which are beyond my skill and power, may the conscious presence of the unseen Spirit give me confidence and strength.

Saturday, Twenty-first Week, Eph. 6:13-17

13 Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

It is a great thing to have the soldier spirit, but the soldier spirit without the soldier armor will not win the battle. Nor is it enough to take some of the divine equipment against the trials of life. We should have the whole outfit, especially when it is freely at our disposal. It is not sufficient to possess the breastplate of righteousness, we must have the shield of faith. Faith as well as righteousness is necessary if we are going to get through this great battle of life so full of mystery. We must have the sword of the spirit which is the Word of God as well as having our feet shod ready for the march. Activity without the divine Word as a weapon will soon end in discouragement and defeat.

Sunday, Twenty-second Week, Eph. 6:18-19.

18 with all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supp'ication for all the saints, 19 and on my behalf, that utterance may be given unto me in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,

The Christian who is living in the largeness of life is in a perpetual attitude of all kinds of prayer. Stated times of prayer are not enough for him, nor can he be content with any one kind of prayer; he not only offers prayer of intercession, but of thanksgiving, not only of thanksgiving, but of confession, not only of confession, but of adoration. Christian prayer is the instinct of relationship to God in Christ.

And that instinct expresses itself, if it be in a healthy condition, a hundred times a day in various aspects of expression. Spiritual things become the home of the thoughts of a truly spiritual life. It is not an effort to think of them, the tendency of the inner life is that way.

Monday, Twenty-second Week, Eph. 6:20.

20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

An ambassador in chains. One's limitation may be his opportunity. One's limitation may be an element in his power. One's limitation may be a blessed meeting place with his Lord. Is it not some chain of limitation that has made us what we are? But for that we might not have been the men of prayer. But for that we might have been carried away by the spirit of the world. But for that we might have no tender sympathy to give to those who are bound by some chain. There is an advantage in what we call disadvantage. The great matter is to be sure that the chain which limits us has not been forged by our own indolence, or pride, or self-will.

Tuesday, Twenty-second Week, Eph. 6:21-24.

21 But that ye also may know my affairs, how I do, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: 22 whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that ye may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts.
23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love incorruptible.

It is a mark of love for our friends not only to think of them but to let them know something concerning us. When we are separated for a time from our friends, we must bear in mind that they have a claim not only upon our thoughts, but also upon the information which we can give them regarding ourselves. St. Paul not only thought of the Ephesians, he sent Tychicus to tell them all that they would be interested to know.

We sometimes forget that we greatly disappoint our friends

by the infrequency of our letters and by the lack of our really taking time to impart the information which they desire, and that would be a comfort and a blessing to them. How few of our letters breathe a benediction. And it is usually the life in bonds which sends the benediction.

SECTION VI.

Epistle to the Philippians

Wednesday, Twenty-second Week, Phil. 1:1-3.

1 Paul and Timothy servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
3 I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you.

St. Paul's epistle to the Philippians is perhaps the most personal of all his letters. His great, generous heart was deeply touched by the gift that was sent to him, and such a token of love may have been the means of giving him a greater affectionate confidence in addressing his beloved friends. Not that he desired a gift, but the gift may have created an atmosphere which made it easier for him to express himself.

St. Paul's salutation at the beginning of his letters always emphasizes the grace of God, as if that filled his mind as the great common fact which bound believers together.

And then there follows the expression of the instinct of Christian brotherly love carried to its highest degree, when the apostle thanks God upon every remembrance of his friends, showing how unified the apostle's life was. His relation to men and his relation to God were not separate compartments in his life, they were a vital unity. All true character is a unity. A personality with fireproof partitions in it is not a Christan construction.

Thursday, Twenty-second Week, Phil. 1:4-5.

4 always in every supplication of mine on behalf of you all making my supplication with joy, 5 for your fellowship in furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now.

It is one thing to pray for our friends, it is another thing

to pray for them with joy. If the element of joy were only present in our praying, and especially in our intercessory prayer, how much added power would be introduced into it. And what are the elements in such joy? It is made up of a great love, a great sense of power with God, and a great sense of the effectiveness of the power of God in bringing real blessings into lives.

Joy in intercessory prayer is the abounding sense of what one is thus able to do for others. That one is having a definite influence with God on behalf of lives is one of the most satisfying realities of existence.

If we only believed this fully intercessory prayer would be one of the heavenliest of experiences.

Friday, Twenty-second Week, Phil. 1:6-7.

6 being confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ: 7 even as it is right for me to be thus minded on behalf of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as, both in my bonds and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers with me of grace.

While it is well to be earnest in intercessory prayer, we must remember that the Spirit of God is also doing his own work in other lives.

It is possible to be overanxious concerning others. Some godly parents are overanxious concerning their children, they are tempted in their great earnestness to forget that the divine Spirit is at work. Overanxiety is earnest unbelief.

The reason why some Christians are joyless in their lives is that they are trying to take care of the work of the divine Spirit as well as their own, and it is too much for them. It is a great thing to know where our work ends. and God's work begins.

Lord, teach me to carry the burden of responsibility which Thou hast given me. But teach me to lay down the burden of responsibility which is Thine, and which is far too heavy for me. May I thus find joy in service.

Saturday, Twenty-second Week, Phil. 1:8-11.

8 For God is my witness, how I long after you all in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus. 9 And this I pray,

that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; 10 so that ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ; 11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

St. Paul longed to have his Christian friends grow in the spiritual life. That was the burden of his prayers for them. And he here indicates some of the elements in a growing Christian life: an increase of love that is wise and tactful; the ability to discriminate between the true and the false as these are encountered in the various situations of life; a transparent character, expressing itself in actions that offend no man's conscience and that permits the enjoyment in the soul of all that peace and joy which come to those who live holy lives. Wise affection, discernment, sincerity, outward consistency, and joy are some of the marks of a growingly Christian life. Let us not be content till these abound in us. Let us be afraid of having an experience which has ceased to grow, which is a memory rather than a present reality.

Sunday, Twenty-third Week, Phil. 1:12-14.

12 Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel; 13 so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole prætorian guard, and to all the rest; 14 and that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear.

All triumphs of the gospel must come through some form of self-effacement on the part of the servant of Christ. It is the lowly bearing of the suffering servant of Christ that strikes the deep chord in human hearts. And it is the suffering servant who inspires the courage of more timid workers. The biographies which inspire us are not those of smug souls but the lives of those who have been in all kinds of hard places, those who took enormous risks because they were not thinking of themselves but of their usefulness to the Kingdom of God. And every such stand is an abiding inspiration for others to do likewise. It may be there are many waiting for you to take the courageous step; then they will follow.

Monday, Twenty-third Week, Phil. 1:15-19

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: 16 the one do it of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel; 17 but the other proclaim Christ of faction, not sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds. 18 What then? only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. 19 For I know that this shall turn out to my salvation, through your supplication and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

The actions of the mean soul cannot injure him whose heart is stayed on Christ. He only succeeds in contracting, in withering, his own inner life. Our refuge from the cruel behavior of others is in quiet fellowship with Christ, in that attitude God will turn what seems to harm us into everlasting joy. On the other hand, remember it is a vain thing to try to injure him who is living in obedient fellowship with Christ. He wears a coat of shining mail. And while you may be damaging your own soul by ungenerous attitude toward him, he is finding out the blessed reality of the promise that all things work together for good to them that love God.

Tuesday, Twenty-third Week, Phil. 1:20-22.

20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing shall I be put to shame, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death. 21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if to live in the flesh,——if this shall bring fruit from my work, then what I shall choose I know not.

When one can come to the point of being completely identified with the purpose of Christ in his life, when he has made the great surrender, in those places of his life where he was formerly hesitant and sensitive, then he enjoys the glorious freedom from care which belongs to the true disciple. All such people live in the enjoyment of a peace giving independence of what the world thinks, not an insolent independence, but an humble, cheerful indifference. Slavery to the mind of Christ has brought emancipation from the tyranny of the world.

Lord, may my surrender to Thee be so complete that henceforth there shall be nothing to fear. May it be so complete that I shall have no burden but Thy will, and Thy will is perfect rest.

Wednesday, Twenty-third Week, Phil. 1:23-26.

23 But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: 24 yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake. 25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yea, and abide with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith; 26 that your glorying may abound in Christ Jesus in me through my presence with you again.

Because a Christian lives with Christ in the eternal, it does not follow that he has no interest in the welfare of his fellows. On the contrary, it is his living with Christ in the eternal which gives him his deep and discerning interest in his fellows. He has a passionate enthusiasm for humanity which strikes a far deeper note than superficial talk about being interested in one world at a time. It is only he who comes forth from the eternal, as it were, to labor in time who has an adequate sympathy and a sufficient message for his generation.

Thursday, Twenty-third Week, Phil. 1:27.

27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and see you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the gospel;

The ideal for the Church of Christ is that the whole membership should stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel. What a glorious aim! How shall we begin to realize it? First of all in our own individual church let us have one spirit and one mind. Let us endeavor to realize it in our own community, not by competition, but by cooperation, not by independent action, but by consulting with our neighbors. There is religion in cooperation. The Spirit of God is seeking to establish a connection between us and our neighbors that we may serve together. We have emphasized service, the Spirit is now emphasizing service together. And there is a loud

call for men who can think through the problems involved in the larger unity beyond the local churches, in the nation and in the world.

Friday, Twenty-third Week, Phil. 1:28-30.

28 and in nothing affrighted by the adversaries: which is for them an evident token of perdition, but of your salvation, and that from God; 29 because to you it hath been granted in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer in his behalf: 30 having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

Nothing can conquer a man who is walking in the will of God. It is quite true he may seem to be vanquished, but it is only in the seeming. Nothing is strong enough to cause his defeat. It is therefore the duty of the man of God to habituate himself to a confident temper of life. To be terrified, to be scared, to be panic-stricken, means giving up to unbelief, to a distrust in the power and purpose of God. Faith in God implies keeping cool, unexcited, unmoved, tranquil. And such a bearing has a wonderful influence upon others, while the panic-stricken attitude tends to upset everything and everybody.

Saturday, Twenty-third Week, Phil. 2:1-4.

1 If there is therefore any exhortation in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions, 2 make full my joy, that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; 3 doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; 4 not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others.

If Christian experience is a reality in the inner life, then it must express itself by humility in the outer life. And there is no more signal evidence of the supremacy of the Spirit in the inner life than humble, self-effacing association with others. Not a mere passive resignation which is too negative to be greatly interested in others, but rather a humility which is actively and enthusiastically interested in whatever concerns one's associates. It is such an attitude which makes the joy of Christian leaders complete, when

workers have so lost themselves in the good cause that they are not sensitive about their rights, and their adequate recognition. On the other hand, few things burden a leader's heart more than the small jealousies and petty rivalries of subordinate workers.

Sunday, Twenty-fourth Week, Phil. 2:5-8.

5 Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; 8 and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.

It ought not to be so difficult for us to be humble in our relations with others when the example of Christ is so vividly before our minds. He did not cling to His supreme heavenly rights and privileges. He was willing to surrender everything to the limit of humiliation. And that being so we ought to be content to have fellowship with Christ in His lowliness. It is the way with every true life. It is the road which the highest life traveled. That should be consolation enough for us. And it is in such a bearing that rest of soul becomes a sweet and satisfying experience.

Lord, may I not refuse to walk on the lowly way. When my heart would be rebellious teach me to remember it was the path Thou didst travel. And as I begin anew quietly to walk with Thee, may I pluck the flower of rest which grows upon no other road than Thy pathway.

Monday, Twenty-fourth Week, Phil. 2:9-11.

9 Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; 10 that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

In our shortsightedness we cannot see that the lowly path is the only one that leads to eternal exaltation. But humility has a great future. It does not make its own future. God takes care of that. The supreme lowliness of Jesus led to His supremacy. It is a hard doctrine, it needs a great

faith to accept it, to live it, to believe that when everything seems to be giving way under one's life, it is only a stage in an inevitable progress, that such experience is necessary if there is to be final and abiding vindication. But that is one of the supreme messages of the life of Jesus and of all who have drunk deeply of His spirit.

Tuesday, Twenty-fourth Week, Phil. 2:12-13.

12 So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure.

We must not be unduly dependent upon teachers and preachers for the development of our spiritual life. The abiding Spirit of God is ready to work in every obedient soul. He is the great teacher. He works from within, He whispers the will of God in the inner life. And as we work out what He works in, so we grow into the likeness of Christ. The absence of one who may be a great inspiration to us must not be made the excuse for a lack of spirituality. The highest inspiration to holiness of character is with us continually. Even when we do not feel His presence, He abides within us waiting only for the cooperation of our obedience to take entire possession of our being.

Wednesday, Twenty-fourth Week, Phil. 2:14-16.

14 Do all things without murmurings and questionings; 15 that ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, 16 holding forth the word of life; that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ, that I did not run in vain neither labor in vain.

It is not enough to do our Christian duty, we must do it in a Christian way. In fact, we have not done our duty till we do it in a Christian way. Some people undo all the good they try to do by the spirit of complaint, and controversy in which they engage in their work. They not only spoil their own spirits, and mar the work, but they are a very real trial to their associates. On the other hand, the mag-

nificent way in which some do their work is an inspiration all around. The spirit in which they do it does perhaps even more good than the work itself. It is done so cheerfully, hopefully, reliably, that not only are fellowworkers cheered, but the outside world is impressed.

Thursday, Twenty-fourth Week, Phil. 2:17-18

17 Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all: 18 and in the same manner do ye also joy, and rejoice with me.

When one who calls upon others to make sacrifices is himself ready to make greater sacrifices then the spirit of true leadership is realized, and the possibility of confidence is established. And it is such sacrifice which creates the atmosphere of enthusiasm and joy. Without sacrifice joy is stifled and formality takes its place. But wherever real and mutual sacrifice is made there the happy side of Christian life is possible. But the sacrifice must not all be on one side. The leader must not expect the followers to make all the sacrifices, nor must the followers expect the leader to make all the sacrifices.

Friday, Twenty-fourth Week, Phil. 2:19-24.

19 But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will care truly for your state. 21 For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. 22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a child serveth a father, so he served with me in furtherance of the gospel. 23 Him therefore I hope to send forthwith, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me: 24 but I trust in the Lord that I myself also shall come shortly.

Information concerning others is a basis for increasing interest in them. And this applies particularly in regard to the Church's mission work. There should not only be mission workers, but we often feel the need of having those who can go forth and bring back vivid impressions of what is being done. And we need to get the information through men like Timothy who are in absolute, unselfish sympathy with the situation. The testimony in regard to missions from mere tourists is not always fair, and those who try to

be fair are not always enough in heart sympathy to be able to discern the spiritual significance of the work. For sympathy is the means by which we see the sublimer side of everything.

Saturday, Twenty-fourth Week, Phil. 2:25-27.

25 But I counted it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need; 26 since he longed after you all, and was sore troubled, because ye had heard that he was sick: 27 for indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow.

Epaphroditus who came to St. Paul at Rome as a messenger bearing a gift from the Philippian Christians turned out to be something more than a messenger. He did more than his task. He went far beyond what was expected of him, perhaps far beyond what was wise. He overworked himself to the edge of the grave in zealous service of Christ. The beautiful thing about it was that he did not seek praise, he did not even look for sympathy in his sickness. For he was brokenhearted when his fellow Christians at Philippi heard that he was ill. This heroic man rebukes those workers who are always mildly complaining about their health, and adding to the burdens of their friends unnecessarily by exaggerated self-consciousness.

Sunday, Twenty-fifth Week, Phil. 2:28-30.

28 I have sent him therefore the more diligently, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. 29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all joy; and hold such in honor: 30 because for the work of Christ he came nigh unto death, hazarding his life to supply that which was lacking in your service toward me.

We never know what some noble souls do and suffer except as we hear of it in some roundabout way. They would never think of talking about it. But we learn afterwards that some difficult work was done amid great pain or sacrifice of some kind or another. It was done so quietly, so cheerfully, that somehow nobody thought much of it till

some outsider let some light in upon the situation. Then our eyes were opened, then we appreciated the situation and a modest, humble worker was discovered to have a larger personality, and to fill a larger place than we had dreamed.

Monday, Twenty-fifth Week, Phil. 3:1-3.

1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you. to me indeed is not irksome, but for you it is safe. 2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the concision: 3 for we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

The Christian life is negative and positive. It is a holy, joyous allegiance to our Lord, and it is a separation from all that would make a life of spiritual rejoicing impossible. When St. Paul said "Beware of dogs," he meant that his converts should have no association with those who would bring them back into bondage to ceremonies from which the gospel had made them free. The Judaizing teachers called the Gentiles dogs, but St. Paul here turns the tables. It is only close fellowship with Christ that can safeguard Christian souls from the plausible half truths which seek to find an entrance into their minds and lead them away from the glad liberty of the gospel.

Tuesday, Twenty-fifth Week, Phil 3:4-7.

4 though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh: if any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more: 5 circumcised the eighth day of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 as touching zeal, persecuting the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless. 7 Howbeit what things were again to me, these have I counted loss for Christ.

If the way of salvation preached by the Judaizing teachers was enough by which to find peace then St. Paul was conspicuously eligible, he fulfilled every condition. But he realized that everything on which he had previously rested as a Pharisee for acceptance with God had to be cast aside if he was to participate in divine grace as revealed in Christ. And we must not forget that we stand on the same ground as

the apostle. It is not our prayerfulness, it is not our service, it is not righteousness of life, which give us access to God, it is our simple trust in the forgiving love of Christ that is the root of our peace. But we must not confuse root with fruit.

Wednesday, Twenty-fifth Week, Phil. 3:8-9.

8 Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ, 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith:

Nothing must stand in the way of complete trust in Christ as the foundation of Christian life. Everything that would weaken dependence upon Him must be cast aside. Nothing that we can do can in any way be a substitute for child-like faith in Him. It was when John Wesley realized that fact to be fundamental that he entered into a new day of spiritual liberty and power. And few men ever lived a more intensely self-sacrificing life than he, and yet he came to see that he must find a basis of spiritual character entirely outside of his own achievements. It was when Wesley found Christ and Christ alone to be the ground of his hope that he had a message for England.

Thursday, Twenty-fifth Week, Phil. 3:10-11.

10 that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death; 11 if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead.

It is not enough to participate in Christ's forgiveness, a Christian must also share in Christ's sufferings and death in order to share in His resurrection power. Justification before God through Christ is the beginning of a regenerated life, but it is far from being the whole of it. Being justified, a Christian identifies his life so completely with Christ through obedience that there is fellowship with Christ in suffering, and in proportion as that is a fact in experience, there is also fellowship with Christ in resurrection power. That is to say, the measure in which a Christian dies with

Christ is the measure in which he shares in the triumphant spiritual power of Christ.

Friday, Twenty-fifth Week, Phil. 3:12-14.

12 Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before. 14 I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

One may surrender his life to Christ at any given moment, but the actual possession of that life by the mind of Christ is a gradual experience. Consecration may be an immediate act, but sanctification is a growth. Christ reveals His will step by step to those who surrender themselves to Him. And in order to enter into the mind of Christ there must be a forgetting of the things which are behind, and a remembering of what His will is for this present moment. Christ cannot lead a life into the knowledge of His will who insists upon living in the past. Our Lord would concentrate the mind upon the next duty, and as we do it there will be light for the task beyond the next.

Saturday, Twenty-fifth Week, Phil. 3:15-16.

15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye are otherwise minded, this also shall God reveal unto you: 16 only, whereunto we have attained, by that same rule let us walk.

To be perfect according to the New Testament is not sinlessness, it is rather to have the desire to belong wholly to God. It has to do more with resolve, longing, rather than with achievement. And there may be mistakes, faults, in such a life. But if the desire for being fully possessed by God is sincere and abiding, those mistakes and faults will gradually be corrected, if the same simple attitude of trust and obedience is maintained. There must, however, be patience with God and with oneself in the walk of faith. God does not do everything at once in nature or in a redeemed soul.

Sunday, Twenty-sixth Week, Phil. 3:17-19.

17 Brethren, be ye imitators together of me, and mark them that so walk even as ye have us for an ensample. 18 For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end is perdition, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.

Young Christians are sometimes perplexed as to what type of so-called Christian to follow, whether to follow those who emphasize belief, but do not seriously live the life, or to follow those who apparently live the life and yet do not make much of belief. But they are not shut up to these two alternatives. There are Christians who combine belief and conduct, faith and works, who trust in the grace of God and who are also holy in life. Such should be the example for young Christians to follow. Men who, like St. Paul, believed profoundly yet lived in absolute consecration to the will of Christ, are the true exponents of the Christian life.

Monday, Twenty-sixth Week, Phil. 3:20-21.

20 For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself.

The false type of so-called Christian is earthly minded, and the true believer is heavenly minded. The eternal world is the real world to him, and he is sustained in his life and work in this world by the glorious hope of a still closer fellowship with Christ and a more adequate power of self-expression through a glorified body. This hope does not make a Christian less useful in the midst of the problems of this world; it makes him all the more genuine in his motives, all the more heroic in his endeavors. He brings the spirit and power of eternity into the tasks of time.

Tuesday, Twenty-sixth Week, Phil. 4:1-3.

1 Wherefore, my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my beloved.

2 I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche, to be of the same mind in the Lord. 3 Yea, I beseech thee also, true yokefellow, help these women, for they labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

The deepest satisfaction and the supreme sense of success in a Christian worker's life spring from the fact of having been able to bring other lives into a true knowledge of Christ. Every other achievement fades into insignificance in comparison. That is the real joy and crown, that is the holy satisfaction and success. And anything that would mar the spiritual progress of those one has helped is always a matter of grave concern. Unfortunately the cause of spiritual backsliding is sometimes a misunderstanding between two Christians. And the misunderstanding not only affects the two who are involved, but it affects the whole atmosphere of the Church. Two such people have a solemn obligation to settle their controversy for their own sakes, for the sake of the Church and for the peace of mind of the leaders in the holy cause.

Wednesday, Twenty-sixth Week, Phil. 4:4-5.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice 5 Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

Because there may be trouble we must not surrender to the mood it seeks to create in us. The abiding mood of Christian character is to rejoice in the Lord. The greatest rejoicings of the highest types of Christians have been in the darkest days, in the sorest trials. We must face every situation in the spirit of gentleness, patience, forbearance. And we can afford to exercise that spirit. The future is ours. The Lord is at hand. We shall be vindicated. All that is wrong shall be judged. Men of the world should see that we are waiting patiently for a higher, a final verdict, and that in the meantime we are in no panic.

Lord, help me to quietly wait for Thy vindication. Teach me to abide in the spirit of gentleness and patience. May men see that I am waiting for the judgment of my Lord upon this passing life.

Thursday, Twenty-sixth Week, Phil. 4:6-7.

6 In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be

made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

We have here the secret of a great peace. (1) To be anxious for nothing, which means simply to be concentrated in mind; to keep the mind steadily on the main business, not permitting irrelevant thoughts, secondary suggestions, to invade the mind. (2) To let everything we do be bathed in the atmosphere of prayer. (3) To let the spirit of thanksgiving be upon us, and that implies the spirit of remembering the goodness of God in the past. Not living in such a hurry that we have no time to recollect what God has already done for us. That attitude shall be the condition of a great peace which shall take possession of both heart and mind through fellowship with Christ.

Friday, Twenty-sixth Week, Phil. 4:8.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

A Christian mind safeguarded by the deep peace of God will not meditate upon anything and everything. The mental conscience of a soul possessed by the peace of God is very discriminating as to what shall be the subject matter for thought. Such a mind dwells in the realm of truth, it will not think a lie, it will not think falsely. It will think of what is honorable, it will give no quarter to what is dishonorable. It will think righteous things as between man and man. Purity will be the antiseptic atmosphere in which it shall live. And the thoughts of the peace-possessed mind will also be concerned with what is lovely, they will be beautiful, they will be artistic. And it will also speak with fairness, with winning attractiveness. Such will be the product of a mind pacified by the presence of God.

Saturday, Twenty-sixth Week, Phil. 4:9.

9 The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

We can offer with confidence to others only that truth which we have lived ourselves. And what we have lived ourselves we can fearlessly offer to others. That is the secret of spiritual conviction. That is the secret of spiritual influence. It is not likely that we shall be able to convince and satisfy other lives, except as what we teach has first had a place in our own character, and has satisfied our own soul. We can give to others only the overflow of our own spiritual satisfaction. And it is when we know how real that is, from personal experience, that we have a supreme motive for boldly passing on to others that which has nourished our own inner life.

Sunday, Twenty-seventh Week, Phil. 4:10-18.

10 But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length ye have revived your thought for me; wherein ye did indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity. 11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. 12 I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. 13 I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me. 14 Howbeit ye did well that ye had fellowship with my affliction.

15 And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; 16 for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need. 17 Not that I seek for the gift; but I seek for the fruit that increaseth to your account. 18 But I have all things, and abound: I am filled, having received from Epaphroditus the things that come from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.

It is not the material gift which is the source of delight to unselfish souls who have received something. It is the goodwill that is back of it, it is the bond that it indicates. The outward, the tangible gift is but a sign, a symbol, of something better, more precious. It is like the stars and stripes, only a flag, but it stands for so much to the discerning mind. It is not the material side of the gift which is desired by noble characters, it is the spiritual side. And the giving blesses the giver as well as the receiver. That is

why giving should be encouraged in many lives, the act enriches the life. It would be well if children and young people were encouraged to give more rather than to expect. Those who are not encouraged to give suffer a great lack in their higher education.

Monday, Twenty-seventh Week, Phil. 4:19-23.

19 And my God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. 20 Now unto our God and Father be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.
21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren that are with me salute you. 22 All the saints salute you, especially they that are of Cæsar's household.
23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

One may not be able to repay a great kindness in anything like the same form as it was bestowed. The most many a true servant of God can do is to commend generous hearts to God that He may supply all their need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. And to do that in faith and in the power of spirit-inspired intercession, is one of the greatest services one can render to another. The great matter is to redeem the commending of friends to God from mere empty words, and to make it a holy reality. And the humblest, the obscurest, the most tried lives can do more for others through intercession before God, than this world dreams of. Their faith, their persistent pleading, can do more than money can achieve.

SECTION VII.

Epistle to the Colossians

Tuesday, Twenty-seventh Week, Col. 1:1-5.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother, 2 to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ that are at Colossæ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

3 We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, 4 having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have toward all the saints, 5 because of the hope, which is laid up for you in the heavens, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.

St. Paul opens his epistle by announcing his relation to his fellow Christians, and by showing that his apostleship was not a self-chosen position, but it was according to the command of God. His letter is addressed definitely to consecrated brethren in Christ, who are faithful in their consecration, and to whom he would convey the grace and peace of God. The apostle had heard of the range of the Christian experience of the Colossian Christians. The had faith in Christ. They had love towards their fellow Christians. They had hope of heaven. And the possession of such Christian experience on the part of his friends filled his heart with thanksgiving to God, and with the spirit of intercession on their behalf. St. Paul does not dwell upon generalities. He is definite, clear, explicit. It would be well for us as Christian workers if we could maintain as clear and definite realtions to Christ, to His gospels, and to His people, as are here stated by the apostle.

Wednesday, Twenty-seventh Week, Col. 1:6-7.

6 Which is come unto you; even as it is also in all the world bearing fruit and increasing, as it doth in you

also, since the day ye heard and knew the grace of God in truth; 7 even as ye learned of Epaphras our beloved fellow-servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf.

The Christian gospel is a universal message. It is an appeal to the elemental man everywhere. It is not a local utterance. It is universal because it answers a universal need. And the gospel finds a world-wide response. Its message bears fruit in every part of the world. We need to hear more of the triumphs of the gospel in the remote and dark places of the earth. It would quicken our own faith. It would reveal to us the power of God, and the cry of the universal heart. There are many great books which would open our eyes upon the triumphs of the gospel in our day, if we inquire for them at the library.

Thursday, Twenty-seventh Week, Col. 1:8-10.

8 Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.
9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray and make request for you, that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 to walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

The fact that the Colossian Christians had a definite spiritual experience inspired the apostle to pray that they might possess all the blessings God had for them. He prayed that they might fully know the will of God, and that they might be able to translate that knowledge into consistent living, and fruitful service, continually increasing in the knowledge of God. We as Christian workers must see that this is the great need of the Church, that there should be Christians who have an experience, but that there should be more who have a growing experience, an unceasing expansion in spiritual knowledge and service, which knows no arrested development and whose spiritual consciousness is not a past memory but a daily expanding reality.

Friday, Twenty-seventh Week, Col. 1:11-12.

11 Strengthened with all power, according to the might of his glory, unto all patience and longsuffering with joy; 12 giving thanks unto the Father, who made us

meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Nothing short of divine power can keep a life patient, and free from the spirit of revenge, under certain trying circumstances, and to exercise these virtues of patience and longsuffering, with joyfulness, with triumph, with something more than mere grim endurance, requires the strengthening grace of God. And in the midst of all that to have the spirit of thankfulness, to live in the attitude of mind which counts our blessings, instead of dwelling complainingly upon our troubles, is a revelation to the world of the true Christian bearing. The strength necessary for us to so live is available through the prayer of faith in Christ.

Saturday, Twenty-seventh Week, Col. 1:13-14.

13 Who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love; 14 in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins.

To be rescued from the tyranny of darkness by the coming of light is a very real blessing in the physical world. To emerge from the darkness of the Catacombs into the bright sunlight is a wonderful translation, or for the entombed miners to breathe once again the free air and sunshine, but these are faint illustrations of that greater deliverance which comes to those who were once conscious of the spiritual darkness in which there was no sense of pardon, of hope, of divine aid, of the meaning of trial. And now they stand in the divine light having a sense of pardon, of hope, of divine help, and of the meaning of trial. They are translated into a glorious, universal kingdom of holy liberty, instead of cowering in a dungeon of despair. And the way out of the darkness into the light was through the cross of Christ, through the forgiveness of sins, through simple trust in the redeeming love of Christ.

Sunday, Twenty-eighth Week, Col. 1:15-19.

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; 16 for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and

things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; 17 and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 19 or it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell.

Christ is the outward expression of God in time. As such He antedates the created world. God has given Him the supreme place, in the seen and the unseen. And in Christ's mission to reveal God to the world, as well as to capture the hearts of men for God He manifests Himself through His Church. In this light, how solemn is the obligation upon Christians who are the outward members of the body of Christ, to faithfully translate into human life the character and program of our Lord. He is the revelation of the character, the power and the purposes of God. And we should be the revelation to the world of the character, the power and purposes of Christ.

Monday, Twenty-eighth Week, Col. 1:20-22.

20 And through him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens. 21 And you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, 22 yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unreprovable before him.

The Cross of Christ is not the attempt of God to be reconciled to men, it is the opportunity for men to be reconciled to God. And the Cross of Christ is the way by which those who are furthest away from God, in both mind and outward life may return to Him. And when men so return the Spirit of God has the opportunity to actually change their inner life so that their blemishes of character are removed and their outward life is made beyond reproach. Salvation is therefore, in the first instance, through faith in the Cross of Christ and afterwards through character wrought into the life by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God.

Tuesday, Twenty-eighth Week, Col. 1:23.

23 If so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and stedfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel

which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven; whereof I Paul was made a minister.

The reason why so many professing Christians do not possess a growing experience is simply that they cease to continue in the attitude of faith and obedience towards Christ. The expansion of personal spiritual experience is dependent upon the exercise of the grace of continuance. There must be no cessation of the conditions of growth. There must be no surrender to mere moods and passing whims, no shifting from the true basis of growth. No seed could become a plant that was taken out of the ground from time to time, a marble or onyx slab would be no substitute for soil. And the spiritual life must abide in Christ, it must be kept in its true environment if growing experience is to be a reality.

Wednesday, Twenty-eighth Week, Col. 1:24-27.

24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church; 25 whereof I was made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which was given me to you-ward, to fulfill the word of God, 26 even the mystery which hath been hid for ages and generations: but now hath it been manifested to his saints, 27 to whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

While Christ suffered in a unique sense, in a sense in which no supplement is possible, in a sense in which he stands absolutely alone as the giver of salvation, yet in the carrying out of Christ's message, of His program, the servant of Christ may thus supplement the sufferings of His master. One who becomes a minister of the grace of God is privileged to suffer in declaring the message. And that suffering comes in various ways if one is faithful in his life and message to his master. Old forms of suffering may pass with advancing civilization, but suffering will not pass away for the faithful servant of Christ. It comes in altogether new guises, but it comes.

Thursday, Twenty-eighth Week, Col. 1:28-29.

28 Whom we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ; 29 whereunto I labor also, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

The Christian religion is something which God has made known, its origin is not in men. It has its origin in the wealth of God. And no cult or race has a monopoly of it. There is the same rich share of the gospel for all. The indwelling Christ may be a fact in the experience of the South Sea Islander as well as in the life of the most privileged. And the preacher of the gospel has the same message for all men. Every man must be warned and every man must be taught, if every man is to be really helped in the divine life. And in order to do this effectively the Christian worker must strive to be a true conductor of spiritual power.

Friday, Twenty-eighth Week, Col. 2:1-2.

1 For I would have you know how greatly I strive for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; 2 that their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, that they may know the mystery of God, even Christ.

Those who receive the message of the gospel never know what it costs the true preacher, true missionary, in order to declare his message effectively. The world can never know or understand the anguish, the agony, the exhaustion of sustained intercessory prayer on the part of the true watcher for human souls. Of course, the work of ministry may be done on the purely intellectual basis without much inner exhaustion. But we are here thinking of the intellectual plus the spiritual aspect of Christian ministry. And the spiritual element truly exercised taxes the personality far more searchingly than any other, that is why we are so tempted to neglect it. But when the spiritual element is exercised then hearts are really comforted, they are knit together, they enter into the riches of full assurance.

Saturday, Twenty-eighth Week, Col. 2:3-5.

3 In whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. 4 This I say, that no one may delude you with persuasiveness of speech. 5 For though I am absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.

All that is in Christ is not evident at first. The treasures which Christ holds for His people are hidden. They have to be gradually discovered. There may seem to be more elsewhere than in Christ for some minds, and men may be able to draw them away with enticing words. There are systems in our own day, as in St. Paul's day, with loud sounding names which seem to hold a great deal more, and which seem to have a bewitching influence. But there may be little behind the names, while Christ is a hidden treasury, never yet fully discovered. He holds the wisdom and the knowledge for which our world is vainly searching elsewhere.

Sunday, Twenty-ninth Week, Col. 2:6-8.

6 As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 rooted and builded up in him, and established in your faith, even as ye were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.
8 Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

It is not enough to believe, belief must be translated into life. It is not enough to receive Christ, His will, His spirit must be carried out into common daily life. Christian character on the inner side of it is not merely a series of more or less earnest longings after Christ, soft, unheroic, poetic musings; it must be a strong, determined giving of the whole heart and mind to Christ. There must be masculine volition put into our mental and spiritual relation to our Lord. It is only thus that we can be kept from being carried away by intellectual fads. And it is just those whose relation to Christ has been of the shallow, emotional, effeminate order, who are most often carried away by some new sophistry.

Monday, Twenty-ninth Week, Col. 2:9-12.

9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, 10 and in him ye are made full, who is the head of all principality and power: 11 in whom ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; 12 having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

The fulness of God is not scattered amid various systems of religion, it is not uttered partly through some great teacher, and partly through Christ. There is truth in all religions. There are messages from all great teachers. But Christ gathers up into Himself the fulness of God. He expresses in complete revelation what other systems, other teachers have expressed in fragments. There is no need for lesser lights when we have the sun. We need no other masters when we have Christ. Epictetus has no unique message for the true disciple of Christ. And we need no angelic mediators between our souls and Christ. We have direct, abiding contact with Him, and in Him we are complete.

Tuesday, Twenty-ninth Week, Col. 2:13-15.

13 And you, being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, I say, did he make alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses; 14 having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross; 15 having despoiled the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Even the callous soul can be quickened. The life that has been benumbed through the influence of sin may be restored. And the sins of such may be forgiven, the bond which he could not pay being cancelled and nailed to the cross. Everything which stands in the way of redemption of souls has been achieved by Christ. But that being so, He calls for the cooperation of the human will. Whoever will may come. That is all Christ asks. But He demands that. There can be no salvation without a response of the will to the Saviour. But all the other obstacles have been

dealt with. The way into the highest blessings in the spiritual world is open to every life that wills to be led by Christ.

Wednesday, Twenty-ninth Week, Col. 2:16-17.

16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: 17 which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's.

Under the rule of Christ no one is held in bondage to any ceremonial rites, as such. They have no authority over the Christian. Christ alone is master. One's relation to food and drink, to feast days, to the Sabbath, is determined wholly by the highest interests of his spiritual life, and his highest influence upon others as a Christian man. The point is that none of these things has any dominion over the individual; he is the servant of Christ, and his relation to all external things is simply as they may contribute to his effectiveness as a true disciple. That is Christian freedom. Such is the emancipation of Christ for obedient lives.

Thursday, Twenty-ninth Week, Col. 2:18-19.

18 Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of the angels, dwelling in the things which he hath seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 and not holding fast the Head, from whom all the body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and bands, increaseth with the increase of God.

Angel worship must not take the place of the worship of our Lord. Such temptations invaded the Colossian church and we are not free from them in our own day. There must be no giving to any other personality in the unseen world what belongs to Christ. Some may see a certain humility in seeking contact with the unseen world through a being less exalted than our Saviour, but it is a spurious humility. And seeking contact with the unseen world through angelic beings, rather than through Christ, must inevitably mean a weakening of the personal spiritual life, and also a weakening of spiritual relationship with fellow believers.

Friday, Twenty-ninth Week, Col. 2:20-23.

20 If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances, 21 Handle not, nor taste, nor touch 22 (all which things are to perish with the using), after the precepts and doctrines of men? 23 Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh.

The Christian religion is not obedience to a set of rules, it is not slavery to ordinances, it is not mere asceticism. It is devotion to a living person. And Christians must maintain their true position, they must not confuse the situation. We live on a higher level than that upon which the sophistries of men operate, and we must abide on that higher level. Those who live upon those lower levels, devotees of various cults, may seem to have plausible enough reasons for so doing, but it is not Christianity. And Christianity includes all that is good for us, in its healthy proportion. It is a balanced appeal to the whole man. There are no extravagant exaggerations, no lamentable omissions. Therefore let us not forsake that which is symmetrical for that which is freakish.

Saturday, Twenty-ninth Week, Col. 3:1-4.

1 If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. 3 For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory.

The Christian life is lived in eternity now. Eternity is His present abode. He is a citizen of the eternal. He has died to the ambitions and the tricks of the passing world. His life in this world is a projection of eternity, and he is all the more desirable a citizen of this planet because he has his ideals, his motives, his power from the eternal. That is the kind of a citizen this poor old world is looking for, one who comes with clean hands to give and not to get, to serve and not to be feted and honored and praised. One whose aims are not an echo of the roar in the street,

but an echo of the voice of the divine Spirit. Such a life may wear very poor clothes and live on a mean street, but that is only the disguise of his royalty. His real life is hidden with Christ in God, but only for a little while; that citizen of the eternal is coming into his own. He shall appear with Christ in glory.

Sunday, Thirtieth Week, Col. 3:5-10.

5 Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry; 6 for which things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience: 7 wherein ye also once walked, when ye lived in these things; 8 but now do ye also put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth: 9 lie not one to another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings.

10 And have put on the new man, that is being renewed into knowledge after the image of him that created him.

The high spiritual destiny of the Christian believer furnishes a supreme motive for dying to the baser side of his life, for refusing to be moved by the evil promptings of the animal nature. Lust and malice belong to the life that perisheth. But lives that are living in eternity, that are swayed by the divine Spirit, have surely found the true motive for living above the cravings of the flesh. It is not a mere effort of the will to do right, it is the sense of being in the swing and throb of a higher order of things, of being in the rhythm of the movement of the divine will working in beings that shall live forever, of moving towards a holy, eternal fellowship.

Monday, Thirtieth Week, Col. 3:11-14.

11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision, and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all and in all.

12 Put on therfore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness longsuffering; 13 forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye: 14 and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.

There is no religious monopoly and bitterness in the eter-

nal world, no social pride and separation, no sex distinction. Therefore Christian people must be preparing for that order of things. They must even now be true to the spirit of the eternal world of which they are citizens. They must show forth to those who are earth-bound the true temper of those who are living in the presence of God. Are we so living now that when we are in the immediate presence of those who are in the light we shall find the spirit of that life congenial to us? Heaven will be heaven for us only as we are being educated into the spirit of heaven now. And the spirit of heaven is self-effacing love.

Tuesday, Thirtieth Week, Col. 3:15.

15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body; and be ye thankful.

The peace of God is given to us as a full blown flower from the garden of God; it is also given as seeds which we may grow for ourselves. There is a deep peace which Christ gives as a gift, and there is also a peace which becomes ours when we fulfill certain conditions in spiritual living. So that there is peace flowing from trust and peace flowing from obedience. This peace of God is to be the umpire of the inner life; it is to decide upon occasions of conflict. It is to quiet every uprising. The most dominant note in our inner life is to be peace, not strife. This is the divine will, that our lives shall have peace as the supreme influence. Is it so? Does the peace of God have the right of way in our inner life?

Wednesday, Thirtieth Week, Col. 3:16.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God.

The word of Christ is continually seeking an entrance into our lives. He is always communicating something. We simply need to put ourselves in the attitude of listening. And the man who listens to Christ will have something to say to his fellows, and we in turn shall be glad to listen to

him who has first of all listened to Christ. And whoever listens to Christ will have something joyous to communicate. It will not be a dirge, it will be a hopeful message, and a hopeful message given in a joyous way. There is great joy in store for the listening soul, and that joy will raise us to being at our best to others. And yet so many of us do not listen to our Lord, we are hurrying hither and thither and listening to other voices which so often only sadden and confuse our minds.

Thursday, Thirtieth Week, Col. 3:17.

17 And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

To do everything for Christ is the secret of a contented soul. To live with a lower motive will mean not only disappointment, but the narrowing of personality. We may not be able to choose our tasks in life, but we certainly choose the motive by which we perform them, and when the motive is to do things for Christ, that is at once the transformation of the task, and the emancipation of the spirit. One is not then the slave of his work, but of his Lord, and that is a very different matter. It is then a natural thing to give thanks to God. Thanksgiving follows as a consequence of doing everything for Christ; it rises in the soul without an effort like fragrance from a flower. The Christian servant works to please Christ, and by so doing is obedient and diligent, finding emancipation from small and petty motives in service, by being under the sway of the supreme motive. And when a life is under such a motive it is redeemed from drudgery.

Friday, Thirtieth Week, Col. 3:18-23.

18 Wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. 20 Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord. 21 Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged. 22 Servants, obey in all things them that are your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord: 23 whatsoever ye do, work heartily as unto

the Lord, and unto men;

In family life the leadership rests with the husband, and it is the Christian duty of his wife to recognize it and to live in the spirit of it. But such leadership on the part of the husband is not for the carrying out of arbitrary measures, he leads in order to serve. Unreasoning, high-handed leadership has no place in a Christian home. And when husbands and wives live in the Christian temper they are in a position to command the reverence of their children. Sometimes the temptation to disobedience on the part of children springs from the lack of the Christian spirit in the parents; that, of course, does not excuse children from rendering obedience. On the other hand, if parents expect discipline in their children, they must themselves be an example in self-restraint.

Saturday, Thirtieth Week, Col. 3:24-25.

24 Knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the recompense of the inheritance: ye serve the Lord Christ. 25 For he that doeth wrong shall receive again for the wrong that he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

Whoever does his work for Christ will not fail of his reward. He has it in part already in the very act of doing his work for Christ; he has it in the peace, the expansion, the joy of his inner life. But he shall have yet more. He is moving towards all that God has in store for the obedient. But he who does wrong, be he master or servant, will also receive the results of that wrong. He has in part received the wages of his sin already, in the contraction of his inner life, the silencing of his joy, the disturbing message of conscience. And there is still more to follow, for the natural history of sin is more sin, and the inability to recover one's self. And these experiences are not arbitrary punishments of God towards certain individuals; they are the outworkings of God's law in a cosmic moral order.

Sunday, Thirty-first Week Col. 4:1-6.

1 Masters, render unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

2 Continue stedfastly in prayer, watching therein with thanksgiving; 3 withal praying for us also, that God may open unto us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; 4 that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. 5 Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. 6 Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one.

The Christian life is both devotional and practical; it is interested in the Kingdom of God near and far away. It exerts an influence upon those who are within the fold and upon those who are outside. The Christian life is a universal life; it is the most comprehensive life in the world. A Christian must bring his Christianity into the wages he pays. When he prays he must pray with mental concentration. He must pray for the coming of Christ's Kingdom in the remote places. He must remember to reveal Christ to those who do not know the Saviour. And his speech must always be such as makes for righteousness; it must always possess an antiseptic quality.

Monday, Thirty-first Week, Col. 4:7-11.

7 All my affairs shall Tychicus make known unto you, the beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord.

8 Whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that ye may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts; 9 together with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things that are done here.

10 Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (touching whom ye received commandments; if he come unto you, receive him), 11 and Jesus that is called Justus, who are of the circumcision: they only are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, men that have been a comfort unto me.

Large interests, passionate enthusiasms, should not make us neglectful of our friends. St. Paul had a world-wide program, and the salvation of the souls of men lay on his heart, but he did not forget Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother. There is a great temptation today to be too busy to have friends, or if we have them, to be too busy to write to them, or to think of them. We have small duties and privileges as well as large ones. Friendships have obli-

gations as well as work. Our obligations are from the center to the circumference of life; not from the circumference to as near the center as time will permit. It is concern for individuals that gives us the true interest in larger numbers. It is concern for detail which gives us poise for larger affairs.

Tuesday, Thirty-first Week, Col. 4:12-15.

12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, saluteth you, always striving for you in his prayers, that ye may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. 13 For I bear him witness, that he hath much labor for you, and for them in Laodicea, and for them in Hierapolis. 14 Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas salute you. 15 Salute the brethren that are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church that is in their house.

How thoroughly sympathetic and human a man of large interests is when he is not only interested in obscure individuals, but interested in their interest in mutual friends. St. Paul was such a man. In his letters he took time to write about people who were of interest to those to whom he wrote. That is what our friends miss so often in our letters. We do not satisfy their human interest in those whom they know and with whom we come in contact almost every day. There is a note of disappointment when they have finished reading our letter. "He says nothing of so and so," our friend says to himself, "I wish he had told me something about him."

Wednesday, Thirty-first Week, Col. 4:16-18.

16 And when this epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea. 17 And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.
18 The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you.

Letter writing is in our day, to a large degree, a lost art. Letters that are worth keeping, worth reading to others for their edification, are very rare. And yet they might fulfil a most helpful mission. Letters breathing genuine

Christian experience, free from cant, would still be a great blessing to many hearts. From our own experience we all know how much we have prized the spiritual message that came from the heart of a friend at the time of crisis. We do not destroy such communications; we have them among our treasures; we bring them out and re-read them, receiving fresh encouragement. And why should such means of helpfulness be neglected? Let us resolve that we shall bring more help to our friends by our letters.

Lord Jesus, I give myself to Thee, body, mind and soul, that I may be filled with Thy Holy Spirit so that I may be ready unto every good work, so that I may be the channel of all the grace and blessing Thou art prepared to manifest through me.

SECTION VIII.

Epistles to the Thessalonians and to Timothy

Thursday, Thirty-first Week, I Thess. 1:1.

1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

St. Paul wrote this his first recorded Epistle at Corinth. He, with Silvanus and Timotheus, had labored among the Jews and Greeks of Thessalonica for probably two or three months, and had succeeded in establishing a church. With great reluctance they left the city, it being thought wise by the local Christians that they should withdraw, owing to the persecution which had been stirred up by the unbelieving Jews.

The apostle had been hindered in his purpose to revisit his converts. But he sent Timothy to encourage them and to get news of their spiritual condition, and the message which Timothy brought back relieved the mind and cheered the heart of the great man, for his children in the gospel had endured the trials of fierce persecution. His desire to see them was intensified and as it was not possible for him to visit them at that time he wrote to them. And in beginning his letter he reveals his humility, his magnanimity, by the gracious recognition of Silvanus, and Timotheus, as his fellow-workers.

The apostle's message was not addressed to some earnest people who were trying to do good work among the inhabitants of Thessalonica, it was addressed to those people who were "called out" from amid the pagan sophistries of their time to the recognition of God as their Father and to Jesus Christ as their Lord. That fact constituted them members of the Church. And as such the apostle saluted them,

and as such they became the recipient of the grace of God, that is to say, of all that God had to give of spiritual blessing. And as they received into their lives the grace of God they experienced the peace of God, the sense of being brought back into normal relations with themselves, with God, and with their fellowmen.

Friday, Thirty-first Week, I Thess. 1:2-5.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; 3 remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father; 4 knowing, brethren beloved of God, your election, 5 how that our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; even as ye know what manner of men we showed ourselves towards you for your sake.

The thoughts of the apostle did not rest upon his own religious emotions, his Christian life was not self-centered, he was possessed by the problems in other lives, by the joys and sorrows of his converts. Their growth in grace filled his heart with gratitude to God.

Free from the self-consciousness which blinds one to moral beauty of other lives, St. Paul had a fine discernment of the spiritual condition of his friends, he lived in admiration of the practical energy of their faith, the wealth of sympathy which inspired their service, and the supreme hope which kept their patience from breaking.

The testimony of their lives was proof that the root of the matter was in them.

And the secret of such magnificence of character was that the gospel of Christ came to them not merely as a system of thought, as a new set of ideas, but in the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, whose presence in a life affects not only the mental outlook, but also the whole underlying personality.

Saturday, Thirty-first Week, I Thess. 1:6-10.

6 And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit: 7 so that ye became an ensample to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia. 8 For from you

hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not to speak anything. 9 For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come.

In their Christian character the Thessalonians were true to the law of conformity to type. They had in St. Paul and his fellow-workers genuine examples of Christ-possessed men, and they were consequently able to rise to the heroic appeal of such types. They were able to endure trial because their teachers inspired them to it by the downright reality of their example. And thus the contagion of moral reality spread. Lives can only be inspired to sacrifice by sacrificial example. And there is here a loud call for leaders in religious work to manifest the heroic elements in Christian character if there is to be a normal type of Christian experience among the rank and file of believers. Theories can never inspire men to heroism in common life, and some of our Christian theories are so far ahead of our practice that they produce little effect upon public opinion and character.

But great sacrifices can only rise out of great and vivid spiritual convictions. The Thessalonian Christians had a supreme sense of the living and true God, they were freed from condemnation by a profound sense of divine forgiveness, and they lived under the power of the coming glory and reign of the Lord Jesus. Such realities, made part of the working capital of a life, not only make sacrifices possible, but give that life a message to all the world.

Sunday, Thirty-second Week, I Thess. 2:1-8.

1 For yourselves, brethren, know our entering in unto you, that it hath not been found vain: 2 but having suffered before, and been shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we waxed bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God in much conflict. 3 For our exhortation is not of error, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: 4 but even as we have been approved of God to be intrusted with the gospel, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God which proveth our hearts. 5 For neither

at any time were we found using words of flattery, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness; 6 nor seeking glory of men, neither from you, nor from others, when we might have claimed authority, as apostles of Christ. 7 But we were gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children: 8 even so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were become very dear to us.

Some people on the outside, and perhaps one or two on the inside, of the church at Thessalonica had been circulating base rumors concerning the motives of the apostle in his work. But he assured the church as a whole that their confidence in him was not misplaced. He was well able to vindicate himself. He had a good conscience. He had made sacrifices, he had neither sought fame nor money. He had given himself absolutely to their service, soul and body.

And every Christian worker must be able to say in his own sphere, and his own way, what St. Paul said, if occasion should arise for its being said. For while the worker himself may not hear it, there are the same slanderous remarks uttered regarding his motives in service, but he has absolutely nothing to fear if he is honestly living in obedience to Christ and in the service of men. It is only the hypocritical worker who may well trouble when criticism falls heavily upon him.

Divine Master, may I so live in fellowship with Thy will, that when criticism shall fall upon me, I shall be humble yet unmoved, finding peace through the conviction that I am faithful to the promptings of Thy Spirit.

Monday, Thirty-second Week, I Thess. 2:9-13.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: working night and day, that we might not burden any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. 10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe: 11 as ye know how we dealt with each one of you, as a father with his own children, exhorting you, and encouraging you, and testifying, 12 to the end that ye should walk worthily of God, who calleth you into his own kingdom and glory.

13 And for this cause we also thank God without ceas-

ing, that, when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe.

The Christian worker must do more than he is paid for, more than men expect of him, for he is living under a more exacting regime than mere precedent or public sentiment, he is the servant of the mind of Christ. And the mind of Christ urges the obedient soul to do what is beyond that which society expects of him.

There is a spiritual ministry towards individuals which even Christian society scarcely expects from workers, and because it is not greatly expected it is sometimes not given, but the spirit is continually urging the obedient to render that service, to comfort, to exhort, to enlighten, individual lives. Because there is no public conscience upon certain forms of Christian service, there is a tendency for such service to become a lost art, to die out. But Christ looks to those who are conscious of the promptings of His Spirit to keep gifts, and forms of service, alive in His Church which are beyond conventional usage.

Tuesday, Thirty-second Week, I Thess. 2:14-16.

14 For ye, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judæa in Christ Jesus: for ye also suffered the same things of your own countrymen, even as they did of the Jews; 15 who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove out us, and please not God, and are contrary to all men; 16 forbiding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved; to fill up their sins always: but the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

Churches imitate other churches; Christian workers imitate other Christian workers. How inspiring it is when what has been imitated has sounded out the true note, how disappointing when that which has been imitated is a false note.

The Judean church gave the Thessalonian church the true note which was echoed through the land. The leaders and followers in the mother church lived in the heroic attitude, and the Thessalonian church followed in their train.

Is our church, our work, our personality, leading others away from reality, or are others constantly being brought

back to their true selves, their real mission, by our example? Or, as followers are we following those who strike true or false notes? Are our ideals helping us to find our truer, braver, our elemental selves, or are they suffocating the noblest in us, turning us into puppets, the playthings of our surroundings?

Wednesday, Thirty-second Week, I Thess. 2:17-20; 3:1-6.

17 But we, brethren, being bereaved of you for a short season, in presence, not in heart, endeavored the more exceedingly to see your face with great desire: 18 because we would fain have come unto you, I Paul once and again; and Satan hindered us. 19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus at his coming? 20 For ye are our glory and our joy.

1 Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone; 2 and sent Timothy, our brother and God's minister in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith; 3 that no man be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that hereunto we are appointed. 4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction; even as it came to pass, and ye know. 5 For this cause I also, when I could no longer forbear, sent that I might know your faith, lest by any means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor should be in vain. 6 But when Timothy came even now unto us from you, and brought us glad tidings of your faith and love, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, longing to see us, even as we also to see you;

St. Paul's wealth consisted in human souls. He spent his strength upon lives, while so many others spent their strength upon the acquisition of things, he therefore had imperishable treasure. And because redeemed lives were his treasure, his heart was where his treasure was, and he showed all the instinctive concern for what was precious to him, that men manifest for what is valuable to them. His interest in lives he had helped was a source of joy and anxiety, it was that for which he was willing to make all kinds of sacrifices. But it was a satisfying investment. There was no disillusionment in connection with it, no tragic regrets

in the evening of life. In what are we investing our life? Is it in the helping of human souls? Are we willing to put as much of ourselves into the investment as men do in the pursuit of gold?

Thursday, Thirty-second Week, I Thess. 3:7-13.

7 For this cause, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our distress and affliction through your faith: 8 for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord. 9 For what thanksgiving can we render again unto God for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God; 10 night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face, and may perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

11 Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way unto you: 12 and the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we also do toward you; 13 to the end he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Some men very soon discover the disappointing limitations of the earthly things for which they have spent their energies; fame, money, or power, even when they get it, leaves so much of the hunger of the inner life unsatisfied. But when we turn to a life like St. Paul's and see how in the midst of all the trouble of his career his inmost soul was comforted and sustained by what he had been able, by the grace of God, to do for others, we are face to face with an aim in life which really satisfies the human spirit, which sustains it in the dark hours of existence, which summons its slumbering energies, and which keeps it in sympathetic contact with the world.

Friday, Thirty-second Week, I Thess. 4:1-12.

1 Finally then, brethren, we beseech and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that, as ye received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, even as ye do walk—that ye abound more and more. 2 For ye know what charge we gave you through the Lord Jesus. 3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye abstain from fornication; 4 that each one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel in santification and honor; 5 not

in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles which know not God; 6 that no man transgress, and wrong his brother in the matter: because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as also we forewarned you and testified. 7 For God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification. 8 Therefore he that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God, who giveth his Holy Spirit unto you.

9 But concerning love of the brethren you have no need that one write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another; 10 for indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia. But we exhort you, brethren, that ye abound more and more; 11 and that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your hands, even as we charged you; 12 that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and may have need of nothing.

Chastity was an absolute law of Christian life even for those who had just emerged from the vices of heathenism, and who were surrounded by no social conscience against impurity. Chastity was the will of God, it was a vital part of a sanctified life, it was an essential element in Christian self-respect. Not only was it imperative as a law of individual life, it was a social law, a man not only owed it to himself to be pure, he owed it to his brother, to society. But not only was there the obligation to live a clean life, there was the further obligation to love one's fellows increasingly until it embraced the whole world. And if chastity was a law of life for the early Christians in communities where there was no social conscience upon the subject, how much more imperative it is in this day when the law of Christ has become the law of society. And if a loving interest in all the world was laid upon the early Christians how much more should that loving interest spring up in us after all the noble examples of foreign missionary zeal through the ages, and the quickened interest of the Church in the proclamation of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Saturday, Thirty-second Week, I Thess. 4:13-18.

13 But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we

that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Those who have died in Christ do not need our pity, for they are sharers in all the hopes of the gospel. That is plain enough to us, but it was not clear to the minds of the Thessalonian Christians. They were not quite certain whether the dead had a share in the triumph of the coming Lord. The apostle assured them that this great hope of believers was for those who are alive and dead, that the incident of death neither excluded Christians from fellowship with Christ at His coming, nor from one another. The great consummation points not to the separation of disciples of Christ, but to their eternal fellowship. And this hope of eternal fellowship with Christ, and with one another, undefeated by death, is one of the sources of sustaining comfort transfiguring Christian sorrow.

Sunday, Thirty-third Week, I Thess. 5:1-11.

1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that aught be written unto you. 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3 When they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall in no wise escape. 4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief: 5 for ye are all sons of light, and sons of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness; 6 so then let us not sleep, as do the rest, but let us watch and be sober. 7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. 8 But let us, since we are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For God appointed us not unto wrath, but unto the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. 11 Wherefore exhort one another, and build each other up, even as also ye do.

The day of the Lord means the day of the perfect manifestation of the Lord, the day of the final deliverance of the people of God. That day has been their hope, their expectation, through the ages. And some have set the time of its coming, they have set the date. But the message of Scripture is that it is unknown, that it will be sudden. That day appeals not to an ingenious curiosity in us to discover the time of its coming, but to a spirit of expectancy, of detachment from the pride of the world. The coming of the day of the Lord is a fact calling for sleepless moral vigilance, for appropriating all the grace that is in Christ for our use. That blessed hope should stir and inspire life to its center. Such an anchor is strong enough to hold the ship of life amid the storms of this mortal experience.

Divine Master, may the hope of being forever with Thee never weaken my interest in common life, may it never shut my eyes to my duties at home; but may it rather renew my relation to the world in which I live, giving me purer motives, happier spirit, and abiding fidelity.

Monday, Thirty-third Week, I Thess. 5:12-28.

12 But we beseech you, brethren, to know them that labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; 13 and to esteem them exceeding highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves. 14 And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all. 15 See that none render unto any one evil for evil; but always follow after that which is good, one toward another; and toward all. 16 Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to youward. 19 Quench not the Spirit; 20 despise not prophesyings; 21 prove all things; hold fast that which is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil.

23 And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it.

25 Brethren, pray for us.

26 Salute all the brethren with a holy kiss. 27 I adjure you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the brethren.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Because a Christian has a glorious hope in the future, that fact must not obscure present sacred human relationships, present obligations, present submission to authority. There has always been a temptation for some to pervert the gospel, to profess heavenly-mindedness, and neglect plain duties. The purpose behind the glorious hopes with which Christ inspires the Christian soul is not to allow him to ignore life's common tasks, but to bind him to them with a purified motive, a new intelligence, an undiscouraged zeal, and holy sympathy.

The blessed hope in the soul enables a man to see that he can afford to return good for evil. It makes it possible for him to rejoice evermore. His prayers are not then mechanical, they are instructive. He can then see reason for thanksgiving in all his experiences.

Tuesday, Thirty-third Week, II Thess. 1:1-12.

1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; 2 Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, even as it is meet, for that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward one another aboundeth; 4 so that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions which ye endure; 5 which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God; to the end that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: 6 if so be that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you, 7 and to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, 8 rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: 9 who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might, 10 when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believed (because our testimony unto you was believed) in that day. 11 To which end we also pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfil every desire of goodness and every work of faith, with power; 12 that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord

Jesus Christ.

St. Paul always begins his epistles by emphasizing the spiritual point of contact between himself and his converts, and their common relation to God through Christ.

While this epistle was evidently written mainly to correct error into which some had fallen, the apostle did not fail to recognize all that was gracious and Christlike in the Christian experience of his friends. They were growing in faith and love. They were patient in tribulation. Their behavior in trial was making their living relation to Christ more and more evident, while those who were persecuting them were becoming less and less conscious of God, and hastening the atrophy of their inner life. It is evidence of a fine discernment, and of true sympathy and self-control when one can leisurely approach another's apparent faults and mistakes along the avenue of honest appreciation and admiration. The rapidity with which we strike at the faults and mistakes of others is sometimes a revelation of our lack of true discernment of character, and a lack of self-control.

Wednesday, Thirty-third Week, II Thess. 2:1-12.

1 Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; 2 to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand; 3 let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, 4 he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming; 9 even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11

And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: 12 that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

St. Paul had intended his teaching regarding the coming of Christ to be an inspiration to the Thessalonians, but, instead, some of them were being led astray by false conclusions from his teaching. They were giving way to fanatical excitement. They were failing to keep in touch with the realities of life. And the apostle showed them that there would be dark days before the great consummation, there would be a falling away under the leadership of a mysterious hostile power.

The glorious coming realities of the Kingdom of Heaven must never shut out from our eyes the common facts of a sinful world. They may not be agreeable, but it is through bravely facing them, endeavoring to deal with them, that we are made ready for all that Christ has in store for us. Excitement, emotionalism, fanaticism, are no preparation for the solemn realities of the future. It is character developed by living soberly for God in a hard place which is the essential prelude for what is coming.

Thursday, Thirty-third Week, II Thess. 2:13-17.

13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 14 whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15 So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours.

16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, 17 comfort your hearts and stablish them in every good work and word.

Christian character is something vastly different from self-culture. It has its origin in the grace of God and the energy of the divine Spirit. Christian character is first of all a spiritual deposit in the soul. And consequently when we see it expressed in the outward lives of good people we must bear in mind that it is something for which we are bound to give thanks to God. He made it possible. And

just as we trace the fruits of the earth back to our heavenly Father's love when we receive them at the table day by day, so should we also trace back the beauty, the sacrifice, the courage in Christians' lives to the same source. Too often we praise and compliment individuals without offering thanksgiving to God for the fruits of Christian character in true lives. And that very recognition of God as we see His grace triumphant in lives is a sacrament of blessing to our own souls.

Friday, Thirty-third Week, II Thess. 3:1-5.

1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified, even as also it is with you; 2 and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and evil men; for all have not faith. 3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and guard you from the evil one. 4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command. 5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ.

When St. Paul asked the Thessalonians to pray for him it was not a self-centered request, he asked them to pray for his usefulness, for the effectiveness of his message. He was not thinking of his own soul, he was thinking of efficient service.

And in asking his friends to pray for his work, consciously or unconsciously he was getting their minds away from themselves, away from their own morbid feelings and moods out into large interests, and in that attitude they obtained unconsciously their highest spiritual development.

It is most unhealthy for a Christian to spend all or most of his time in prayer praying for himself. It may simply deepen his self-consciousness, his self-centered bearing. But when he prays for others, for the great work of evangelization out in the world, in that very act he is deepening the life of his own soul.

Divine Master, save me from self-consciousness in my spiritual life, May I bravely face the great tasks of evangelization in my prayers, and in this attitude of self-forgetting may I trust Thee to nourish my soul.

Saturday, Thirty-third Week, II Thess. 3:6-18.

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from

every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us. 7 For yourselves know how ye ought to imitate us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; 8 neither did we eat bread for nought at any man's hand, but in labor and travail, working night and day, that we might not burden any of you: 9 not because we have not the right, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you, that ye should imitate us. 10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him eat. 11 For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies. 12 Now them that are such we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. 13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing. 14 And if any man obeyeth not our word by this epistle, note that man, that ye have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed. 15 And yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with you all.
17 The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write. 18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

The idler cannot grow in grace, because work is the soil out of which growth comes.

And it is a bad thing to be associated with idlers, because they have lost the point of contact with reality, they are always raising false issues, besides they carry a depressing atmosphere.

The idler is quite likely to be at the same time a busybody, a meddler with other people's affairs; a busy man is in no mood for such work. An exaggerated interference with other men's business must inevitably mean a relaxed concern for our own. And when the mind has ceased to have a keen sense of duty it has failed to keep step with the Spirit of God, for the Spirit is continually emphasizing duty, the next duty, cencentration of the next thought upon the next duty.

Sunday, Thirty-fourth Week, I Timothy 1:1-7.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Saviour, and Christ Jesus our hope; 2 unto Timothy, my true child in faith: Grace, mercy, peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our

Lord.

3 As I exhorted thee to tarry at Ephesus, when I was going into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine, 4 neither to give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questionings, rather than a dispensation of God which is in faith; so do I now. 5 But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned: 6 from which things some having swerved have turned aside unto vain talking; 7 desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm.

St. Paul made much of friendship, and to none was he more closely bound than to Timothy, but even in his correspondence with his dearest friend the work of Christ had the supreme place.

The apostle insisted that Timothy should urge upon the Christian workers with whom he came in contact that they must remember the places of emphasis in Christian teaching. The end to be reached in teaching Christianity was not a mere show of learning, nor the discussion of irrelevant matter which only bred fruitless argument, but which had no practical bearing upon conduct. The message to be preached was faith resulting in a good conscience, a pure heart, and loving service.

And there is still great need for us to bear in mind the vital places of emphasis in Christian teaching. A great deal of confusion and unnecessary discussion is caused by a lack of real understanding as to what the heart of Christianity really is.

Divine Master, teach me to discover from Thy Word, and the experience of its power in my own soul, what is the heart of Thy gospel. Deliver me from all false emphasis, all needless controversy, and thus help to bring in the day of true Christian unity.

Monday, Thirty-fourth Week, I Timothy 1:8-20.

8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully, 9 as knowing this, that law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, 10 for fornicators, for abusers of themselves with men, for men-stealers, for liars, for false swearers,

and if there be any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine; .11 according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

12 I thank him that enabled me, even Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted me faithful, appointing me to his service; 13 though I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: howbeit I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief; 14 and the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 15 Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief: 16 howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ shew forth all his longsuffering, for an ensample of them that should hereafter believe on him unto eternal life. 17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

18 This charge I commit unto thee, my child Timothy, according to the prophecies which led the way to thee, that by them thou mayest war the good warfare; 19 holding faith and a good conscience; which some having thrust from them made shipwreck concerning the faith: 20 of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I delivered unto Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme.

It is certainly a false emphasis to preach the Mosaic law to those who have become partakers of the grace of God in Christ, that is to go back to the partial revelation of Old Testament times. The law is for those who have not yet been morally awakened to a sense of the need of Divine forgiveness. But when that sense of need has been aroused then are lives ready for the message of Christ. And when the message of Christ has been received by faith into penitent hearts, then is the opportunity for the indwelling Spirit of God to show forth in human character the mind of Christ. So that the gospel is both spiritual and ethical: it demands faith and it makes a good conscience possible. When a professing Christian lets go one or other of these he, to use St. Paul's phrase, makes shipwreck. And it is sometimes not until some severe trouble comes that he returns to a life of trust and obedience.

Tuesday, Thirty-fourth Week, I Timothy 2:1-8.

1 I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all

men; 2 for kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity. 3 This is good and acceptible in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony to be borne in its own times; 7 whereunto I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I speak the truth, I lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

8 I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing.

The practice of Christianity is not merely an individual matter. It is that first and foremost, but a Christian, and companies of Christians, must also have a world vision. A real Christian is the only real cosmopolitan in the world, for he has a genuine, vital, intelligent interest in governments and all races of people.

His interest in the large affairs of the Kingdom of God is not an optional matter, it is simply according to the law of conformity to type; it is according to a divine instinct in the normal growth of a healthy Christian soul. And that large interest should express itself in intercessory prayer for rulers, for public men, for leaders of public opinion. And in order to do that there must be some intelligent knowledge of the affairs of the world. That calls for hard thinking, and it gives little time for mere mental loafing.

Wednesday, Thirty-fourth Week, I Timothy 2:9-15.

9 In like manner, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment; 10 but (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works. 11 Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. 12 But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve; 14 and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression: 15 but she shall be saved through her child-bearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.

When the Christianity of the first century drew men and women out of heathenism, we must remember that there

were local conditions which the apostle had in mind when he gave certain specific directions, which have little or no bearing upon our modern life, just as certain directions may be given to women in heathen lands when they embrace Christianity, which would have no significance in a Christian country. But at the same time the spirit of St. Paul's message remains for all time. Ostentatious display, aggressiveness, haughty bearing, have no place in a true Christian woman's life. Her power consists in that strength and charm which are the outward expression of the beauty of holiness.

Thursday, Thirty-fourth Week, I Timothy 3:1-16.

1 Faithful is the saying, If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 The bishop therefore must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, soberminded, orderly, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 no brawler, no striker; but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money; 4 one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (but if a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 6 not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover he must have good testimony from them that are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. 8 Deacons in like manner must be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; 9 holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 10 And let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless. 11 Women in like manner must be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. 12 Let deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. 13 For they that have served well as deacons gain to themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; 15 but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. 16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness;

He who was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the spirit,
Seen of Angels,

Preached among the nations,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory.

The man who is a leader in the work of the Church of Christ must be without reproach. He must be straight in all his behavior, and above all suspicion of merely working for money. His domestic life must be such as to commend the gospel; Christianity must be the main fact in the home circle. And gossip must have no more place among the members of his household than intemperance in his own life. It is not enough that the sins which are condemned by society should be shunned, but also those which society may condone, because it is not sufficiently under the control of the divine Spirit. The leader in Christian work is supposed to lead society to higher conceptions of life, but that is imposible unless his own life and those associated with him at home are striving together to humbly live beyond a merely conventional morality.

Divine Master, before I seek to teach others may my own life bow in contrite submission to the message of Thy Spirit. Forbid that I should be content with the easy judgments of society upon my character. Keep me ever in the attitude of keeping my soul before Thy judgment seat.

Friday, Thirty-fourth Week, I Timothy 4:1-16.

1 But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; 3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth. 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving: 5 for it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer.

6 If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed until now: 7 but refuse profane and old wives' fables. And exercise thyself unto godliness: 8 for bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come. 9 Faith-

ful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation. 10 For to this end we labor and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe. 11 These things command and teach. 12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity. 13 Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching. 14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. 15 Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all. 16 Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee.

When the individual conscience is seared, callous, numb, that life has no protection from all kinds of false ideas, for it lacks that intuitive sense which instantly detects what does not ring true. And there has always been, and there is now, the proclamation of false gospels by those who have thus beat a moral retreat in their own character. The safeguard against surrender to plausible half truths is in keeping close to the verities of the Christian faith in heart and mind.

It is dangerous to try to approach the experiences of the spiritual life through merely taking care of the body. The Bible does not by any means discourage taking care of the body; it says "bodily exercise is profitable for a little," it does good. But the point of the passage is that the place of emphasis in the growth of human personality is not on the physical side but on the spiritual side. And the culture of the spiritual side of life does not at all mean that the physical should in any sense be ignored. But to try to reach up to spirituality through merely trying to keep the body in good condition, without keeping in touch with the facts of Christian faith, is a vain delusion.

Saturday, Thirty-fourth Week, I Timothy 5:1-8.

1 Rebuke not an elder, but exhort him as a father; the younger men as brethren: 2 the elder woman as mothers; the younger as sisters, in all purity. 3 Honor widows that are widows indeed. 4 But if any widow hath children or grandchildren, let them learn first to shew piety towards their own family, and to requite their parents; for this is acceptible in the sight of God. 5 Now

she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, hath her hope set on God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. 6 But she that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth. 7 These things also command, that they may be without reproach. 8 But if any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.

Christ is continually endeavoring to make the man who is living under His sway a true gentleman, in the highest sense of that much-abused word. The younger man who is a Christian will not be harsh towards an older man, and he will treat elderly women with gracious consideration. His bearing towards young women will have the same element of purity as his bearing towards his own sister. He will count it part of his religion to provide for those of his own family who are in need. We dare not forget that the Christian life has to do with the most practical and with what some are pleased to call the most trifling affairs. But it is no trifling affair to let the Spirit of Christ permeate the details of our bearing towards everybody.

Divine Master, I would not forget that Thou art seeking to take hold of my life so that it may convey Thy Spirit to all with whom I come in contact. Keep me from misrepresenting Thee by yielding to hurry, impatience, harshness, and thoughtlessness.

Sunday, Thirty-fifth Week, I Timothy 5:9-16.

9 Let none be enrolled as a widow under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, 10 well reported of for good works; if she hath brought up children, if she hath used hospitality to strangers, if she hath washed the saints' feet, if she hath relieved the afflicted, if she hath diligently followed every good work. 11 But younger widows refuse: for when they have waxed wanton against Christ, they desire to marry; 12 having condemnation, because they have rejected their first pledge. 13 And withal they learn also to be idle, going about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. 14 I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household, give none occasion to the adversary for reviling: 15 for already some are turned aside after Satan. 16 If any woman that believeth hath widows, let her relieve them, and let not the

church be burdened; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

When a woman has been bereft of her husband she is placed in a more difficult and delicate relation to society, and that fact must make her especially careful that in all her relations to the church and to the world she will not injure the cause of Christ through the peculiar temptations of her position.

And according to the apostle's counsel to Timothy, the leader in Christian work must also bear in mind the peculiar temptations of such a bereaved woman's lot in life. He must see to it that neither the woman nor the holy cause suffer because of the difficulties of the situation. He must repulse unwise offers of service, and at the same time give honor to those whose sorrow is fragrant with renewed consecration.

Monday, Thirty-fifth Week, I Timothy 5:17-25.

17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching. 18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his hire. 19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses. 20 Them that sin reprove in the sight of all, that the rest also may be in fear. 21 I charge thee in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality. 22 Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure. 23 Be no longer a drinker of water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities. 24 Some men's sins are evident, going before unto judgment; and some men also they follow after. 25 In like manner also there are good works that are evident; and such as are otherwise cannot be hid.

The leader in the work of the Church is here exhorted to have a keen eye to recognize with honor signal ability in the exercise of preaching gifts. And he must not be hasty in listening to accusations against a worker. There must be witnesses. Mere gossip is to have no quarter.

There is to be no favoritism. Personal likes and dislikes must be sunk in the honest attempt to get the right worker

for the right work. And there is to be no mere acting upon impulse in dealing with men; what is done must be done in a spirit of calm deliberation and self-control. And in order to help the Christian leader to do all that, with strong common sense, the apostle tells Timothy to keep his digestion right, he must not succumb to dyspepsia. And I suppose he recommended wine because there were very few other things at that time to suggest. But in our day there are so many other things much better than wine for the relief of the dyspeptic.

Tuesday, Thirty-fifth Week, I Timothy 6:1-11.

1 Let as many as are servants under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and the doctrine be not blasphemed. 2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but let them serve them the rather, because they that partake of the benefit are believing and beloved. These things teach and exhort.

3 If any man teacheth a different doctrine, and consenteth not to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; 4 he is puffed up, knowing nothing, but doting about questionings and disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, 5 wranglings of men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth, supposing that godliness is a way of gain. 6 But godliness with contentment is great gain: 7 for we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out; 8 but having food and covering we shall be therewith content. 9 But they that are minded to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money in a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Christian men may live under a social system which is far from Christian, but the teaching of the passage is that they must manifest the Christian spirit even in such circumstances. The retention of the Christian spirit in the midst of deferred hopes is of more consequence than the achievement of ends through the violation of the Christian

spirit. One may become a personal failure in the gaining of outward success. While one may be a personal success in circumstances which seem to spell failure. All real failure begins in inner bankruptcy, and all real success consists in inner integrity. And these conditions are so often the reversal of human judgments upon life.

Wednesday, Thirty-fifth Week, I Timothy 6:12-21.

12 Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses. 13 I charge thee in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and of Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession; 14 that thou keep the commandment, without spot, without reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: 15 which in its own times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; 16 who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power eternal. Amen.

17 Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; 19 laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed.

20 O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee, turning away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so called; 21 which some professing have erred concerning the faith.

Grace be with you.

When a Christian surrenders to worldly ideals, which may be popular enough, he violates the whole purpose of his life. He is here to renew, to spiritualize, the ideals of human society, to lay the emphasis upon character rather than upon this world's goods. And in order to do this he must fight. It is no child's game. It calls for the most masculine, the most heroic, determination. We have glorified the man who was willing to die on the battlefield for the honor of his country. We should also have a place of high honor for the man who is willing to lose his life on the business or professional battlefield, if need be, in order to vindicate the

honor of Christ and of his own soul.

Divine Master, may I so drink of Thy Spirit that I shall become a true soldier on the battlefield of principle. When I seem to fail because I endeavor to be true, keep me from panic and from flight.

Thursday, Thirty-fifth Week, II Timothy 1:1-11.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of the life which is in Christ Jesus, 2 to Timothy, my beloved child: grace, mercy, peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, how unceasing is my remembrance of thee in my supplications, night and day, 4 longing to see thee, remembering thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; 5 having been reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in thee; which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and, I am persuaded, in thee also. 6 For which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love and discipline. 8 Be not ashamed therefore of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but suffer hardship with the gospel according to the power of God; 9 who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal, 10 but hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 11 whereunto I was appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher.

A Christian man of long experience can render signal service to the cause of Christ by passing on to a younger man, who is teachable, the secrets of his Christian career. To patiently help mould the character of a promising youth is a really great service. And happy is that youth who, like Timothy, comes under the guiding influence of a great personality. If a young man has not the good fortune to be under the direct influence of some great soul, it is a wise course for him to put himself under the spell of a great Christian as he is revealed in biography, or letters. Frederick W. Robertson has been such a man to many younger men. There is a very real temptation in the lives of some young

people to treat the message and influence of the older Christian with something like mild contempt rather than as a sacred privilege, and then to live to see the day when he must bitterly regret the attitude of neglect.

Friday, Thirty-fifth Week, II Timothy 1:12-18.

12 For which cause I suffer also these things: yet I am not ashamed; for I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day. 13 Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 14 That good thing which was committed unto thee guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us.

15 This thou knowest, that all that are in Asia turned away from me; of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. 16 The Lord grant mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus: for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; 17 but, when he was in Rome, he sought me diligently, and found me; 18 (the Lord grant unto him to find mercy of the Lord in that day); and in how many things he ministered at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

Strong conviction is the armor which makes a Christian proof against being ashamed of his stand for Christ. And when one is living in surroundings which are hostile to vital Christianity conviction born of personal experience is absolutely necessary. Formal Christian belief may seen to be enough when one is at home in the midst of congenial influences, but when a young man goes out into the world where all his beliefs are questioned and perhaps ridiculed, it all depends upon whether he has an experimental grip of his beliefs as to whether he can retain them. It is a great thing for a youth before he goes out into the world to get an experimental grounding in essential Christianity at home, and parents must not wholly blame those children who having received only formal instruction at home lose it out in the larger world.

Saturday, Thirty-fifth Week, II Timothy 2:1-10.

1 Thou therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach

others also. 3 Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life; that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier. 5 And if also a man contend in the games, he is not crowned, except he have contended lawfully. 6 The husbandman that laboreth must be the first to partake of the fruits. 7 Consider what I say; for the Lord shall give thee understanding in all things. 8 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel: 9 wherein I suffer hardship unto bonds, as a malefactor; but the word of God is not bound. 10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

The secret of Christian heroism is not merely the exercise of grim resolution, it is found in a continual fellowship with the love, and forgiveness, and strength of God through Christ. Fellowship with Christ has resulted in the sublimest heroism throughout the Christian ages. For in union with him a Christian never comes to the end of his resources, he is joined to inexhaustible supplies. It is a sense of coming to an end of our resources which is at the root of discouragement. Discouragement is the eclipse of Christ, discouragement is the false idea of having lost God. The sense of the abiding presence of Christ by faith means the ability to endure, and not only does it mean endurance, but endurance which enriches the soul. There is a stoical endurance which turns the heart to stone. But that heroism in the face of difficulty and trial, born of fellowship with Christ, makes the heart tender and sympathetic towards those who are sorely tried.

Divine Master, may I daily renew my strength in Thy presence, in Thy companionship. Teach me to believe that Thy presence is not dependent upon my mood, but upon Thy promise. Thus may I face all that awaits me.

SECTION IX.

Epistles to Timothy, Philemon and Romans

Sunday. Thirty-sixth Week, II. Timothy 2:11-26.

11 Faithful is the saying: For if we died with him,
we shall also live with him: 12 if we endure, we shall
also reign with him: if we shall deny him, he also will
deny us: 13 if we are faithless, he abideth faithful; for
he cannot deny himself. 14 Of these things put them in
remembrance, charging them in the sight of the Lord,
that they strive not about words, to no profit, to the
subverting of them that hear. 15 Give diligence to
present thyself approved unto God, a workman that
needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of
truth. 16 But shun profane babblings: for they will
proceed further in ungodliness, 17 and their word will
eat as doth a gangrene: of whom is Hymenaeus and
Philetus; 18 men who concerning the truth have erred,
saying that the resurrection is past already, and over-
throw the faith of some. 19 Howbeit the firm foundation
of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knoweth
them that are his; and, Let every one that nameth the
name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness. 20 Now
in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and
of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some unto
honor, and some unto dishonor. 21 If a man there-
fore purge himself from these he shall be a vessel unto
honor sanctified, meet for the master's use, prepared
unto every good work. 22 But flee youthful lusts, and
follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them
that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 23 But foolish
and ignorant questionings refuse, knowing that they gen-
der strifes. 24 And the Lord's servant must not strive,
but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing 25 in
meekness correcting them that oppose themselves; if per-
adventure God may give them repentance unto the knowl-
edge of the truth, 26 and they may recover themselves

out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him unto his will.

Spiritual life is according to natural law; there can be no present triumphant resurrection life except as there is an experience of dying to the lower self. Suffering with Christ is the pathway to power.

And it is of the utmost importance to keep clearly before the mind the principles which undergird Christian character, or not to be lost in mere quibbles which create bad feeling, rather than stimulate to holiness of life. The Christian worker can never substitute discussion for a straightforward surrender of his inner life to the Master's use, and his outer life should have the bearing of patient gentleness rather than of pugnacity, towards those who differ from him, for it is only by the exercise of the Christian temper that he can hope to win those who have gone astray, and have added bitterness to their waywardness.

Monday, Thirty-sixth Week, II. Timothy 3:1-17.

1 But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; 5 holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof; from these also turn away. 6 For of these are they that creep into houses, and take captive silly women laden with sins, led away by divers lusts, 7 ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 8 And even as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also withstand the truth; men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith. 9 But they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be evident unto all men, as theirs also came to be. 10 But thou didst follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patience, 11 persecutions, sufferings; what things befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: and out of them all the Lord delivered me. 12 Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 13 But evil men and imposters shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned

and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; 15 and that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: 17 that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.

The servant of Christ in his earnest desire to help men must be prepared for the revelations of the worst side of human nature which will be made in his contact with the world.

And it is well that he should be forewarned as in the words of the Apostle to Timothy, and not only forewarned but it is well that he should have before his mind in order to keep from discouragement the life of a great worker who endured all the trials and persecutions consequent upon tireless continuance.

One cannot get into actual grips with a sinful world on behalf of Christ without realizing how awful sin is, and without feeling the need for that sustainment which comes from the Word of God. It is only the worker who knows, and lives upon the Scriptures, who has at once the necessary spiritual courage to keep at his work and the sufficient weapon to reach the hardened human soul.

Tuesday, Thirty-sixth Week, II. Timothy 4:1-8.

1 I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom; 2 preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 3 for the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables. 5 But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry. 6 For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: 8 henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day: and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.

The preacher who keeps his own life before the judgment seat of Christ will not pander to those people who delight in listening to what is sensational or merely novel. He will not so much consult the wishes of his listeners as the commands of his Master. He will preach the Word and he will keep at it and he will do it with that courage which rebukes sin. But he may find some people resenting it, and then he will be assailed by the terrible temptation to tone down his message, to say to some influential people he did not mean exactly what he said. And if he surrenders he not only has turned from the judgment seat of Christ to the judgment seat of the world, but he has parted with just so much of his spiritual power and with the freedom of his soul. While he who is ready to endure affliction for the truth's sake preserves the integrity of his soul, the freedom of his spirit, and the bearing of joyous anticipation of the crowning day.

Wednesday, Thirty-sixth Week, II. Timothy 4:9-22.

9 Give diligence to come shortly unto me: 10 for Demas forsook me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. 11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is useful to me for ministering. 12 But Tychicus I sent to Ephesus. 13 The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring when thou comest, and the books, especially the parchments. 14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord will render to him according to his works: 15 of whom do thou also beware; for he greatly withstood our words. 16 At my first defense no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account. 17 But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me; that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. 18 The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen. 19 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the house of Onesiphorus. 20 Erastus remained at Corinth: but Trophimus I left at Miletus sick. 21 Give diligence to come before winter. Eubulus saluteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren. 22 The Lord be with thy spirit. Grace be with you.

Great souls with great causes on their hearts suffer keenly when associates prove faithless; they know the bitterness of loneliness. There are real services which we may render them in their solitude. The expression of sympathy, small attentions, however trifling they may seem to us, are often of far greater consequence than we can imagine to those who are bearing the strain of large affairs comparatively alone. We make a grave mistake when we think that we can do little or nothing to help and cheer those who are in conspicuous and perplexing places.

It is just that apparently small service which we can render that might make all the difference between joy and sorrow in their lives. And the opportunity is a fleeting one. Tomorrow we may hear they have gone, and yesterday we were prompted to do or say something that would lighten their burden, but we silenced the suggestion with the excuse that it would not be appreciated or acceptable.

Divine Master: give me the sympathy and discernment so that I may render some help to those who are bearing the strain of large affairs in conspicuous solitude. May the temper of my spirit not be envious or critical, but gracious and cheering.

Thursday, Thirty-sixth Week, Titus 1:1-5.

1 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, 2 in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before times eternal; 3 but in his own seasons manifested his word in the message, wherewith I was intrusted according to the commandment of God our Saviour; 4 to Titus, my true child after a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour. 5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge;

The apostle indicates his relation to God and to the Gospel of Christ before he indicates his relation to his fellow-men.

He bases his authority and his message upon the solemn obligation which was first of all laid upon him. He shows

that he is simply passing on what has been committed to him to deliver to his Christian friends, and to the world. St. Paul never fails to connect all his exhortations to men with the primary purposes of God in Christ. He makes it plain that he is only a channel, he is simply giving audible expression of the mind of the Spirit working through his personality.

And as such he urges Titus to establish the work of divine grace which has been started at Crete. He is not content that a good work was done; that is not enough, it must be preserved, it must be organized, it must be committed to faithful and competent leadership.

And it is of the utmost importance in our own day that all quickened religious life should be preserved, maintained, that it should have organization and leadership that shall to some degree be the guarantee of its continuance. There is a great temptation to be content with large and successful movements without adequate provision being made for their survival.

Friday, Thirty-sixth Week, Titus 1:6-9.

6 if any man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having children that believe, who are not accused of riot or unruly. 7 For the bishop must be blameless, as God's steward; not selfwilled, not soon angry, no brawler, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; 8 but given to hospitality, a lover of good, soberminded, just, holy, self-controlled; 9 holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers.

In order to establish Christians rescued from heathenism a leader in the first century had to possess certain qualifications; so must a leader in our modern Christian society, whose task it is to perpetuate the fruits of evangelistic movements, have certain distinct qualifications. He must have all that is demanded in the Elder of the first century, and some thing more besides. And it is a question whether we make sufficient recognition in our times of the importance of having "missions" followed up by men who are specially adapted to feed those who are babes in Christ with the sincere milk of the Word. Young converts greatly need spiritual teaching suited to the early stages of Christian experience, and it is a question whether we give enough thought to the

problem of having workers who have pre-eminent, expert qualifications to help young believers over the peculiar temptations and difficulties of the beginnings of Christian life.

Saturday, Thirty-sixth Week, Titus 1:10-16.

10 For there are many unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision, 11 whose mouths must be stopped; men who overthrow whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. 12 One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, Cretans are alway liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons. 13 This testimony is true. For which cause reprove them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. 15 To the pure all things are pure: but to them that are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. 16 They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

St. Paul had a very clear view of the influences in the society of his time which tempted and deceived young Christians. And not only was he careful to name those temptations to his converts, warning them against them, but he urged leaders to use strong measures to endeavor to silence those harmful influences.

It is not enough to put Christians on their guard. The Church must exert a social power against everything that would injure the spiritual life of her children. To be silent on such things is not charity, it is cowardice. And when Christian workers take refuge in preaching the gospel to the individual without facing the social complications involved in translating the gospel into life, it is like rowing a boat with one oar; progress is not made. Christ has a message for the individual and also for society, and the messages are not contradictory, they are the counterparts of each other.

Sunday, Thirty-seventh Week, Titus 2:1-10.

1 But speak thou the things which befit the sound doctrine: 2 that aged men be temperate, grave, sober-

minded, sound in faith, in love, in patience: 3 that aged women likewise be reverent in demeanor, not slanderers nor enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good; 4 that they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children. 5 to be soberminded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed; 6 the younger men likewise exhort to be soberminded: 7 in all things showing thyself an ensample of good works; in thy doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, 8 sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of us. 9 Exhort servants to be in subjection to their own masters, and to be well-pleasing to them in all things; not gainsaying; 10 not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

St. Paul's idea of the gospel for the individual extends to the practical facts of life. It not only emphasizes the inner life, the inner relation to Christ, it has a message to the outward behavior of aged men and aged women. It deals with conduct. It imposes the duty upon elderly women towards younger women of insisting upon proper Christian deportment in the home life. It urges upon young men the true discipline of the mental life. It enjoins servants to have a bearing of fidelity and loyalty to their masters. We are tempted not only to separate the social message of St. Paul's gospel from the individual message, but to separate the practical message from the inner spiritual message in individual life. But the apostle emphasizes both sides. He proclaims the need for the grace of God in the soul, but he also insists upon the grace of outward behavior, and he sees no division between the two aspects of truth.

Monday, Thirty-seventh Week, Titus 2:11-15.

11 For the Grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; 13 looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14 who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own

possession, zealous of good works. 15 These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

The grace of God, the atoning work of Christ, the blessed hope of the coming Lord, these are not vague ideas detached from common, practical life. They are the heart and soul of it. They are the dynamic of pure, enthusiastic, morally progressive living. These inner spiritual realities are the secret of a morality which is beyond conventional morality. These truths make Christians, who are really swayed by them, pioneers in the realm of character, not echoes of their surroundings, but original exponents of a higher morality.

The world is dependent upon those who are under the spell of unseen realities for true moral progress in human history. Without such lives there could be no real ethical development; the life of the world would simply repeat the conduct of the past; there would be no progressive originality.

Tuesday, Thirty-seventh Week. Titus 3:1-8.

1 Put them in mind to be in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready unto every good work, 2 to speak evil of no man, not to be contentious, to be gentle, shewing all meekness toward all men. 3 For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. 4 But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and his love toward man, appeared, 5 not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. 6 which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 that, being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. 8 Faithful is the saying, and concerning these things I desire that thou affirm confidently, to the end that they who have believed God may be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

The demagogue is not a progressive, he is a destroyer. The true progressive is he who is reverent towards all the best that is in the past. He does not proclaim revolution,

but evolution in society.

The Christian progressive is a gentle man. He has control of himself in his efforts to improve the world. He has outgrown that activity which is inspired by hate and spite. That is the real secularism of modern society, the efforts of so-called reformers whose own personalities are unreformed, and undisciplined, and whose fiery energy is inspired by hatred. Not until the spirit of Jesus has captured such can they ever really contribute to the progress of the world. The gospel of Christ changing the hearts of men changes their bitter zeal into kindly cooperation with all good men for the coming of the Kingdom of God upon earth.

Divine Master: may I not only be a worker in the world, but may my spirit be right. Help me to have the victory in my own soul, so that I may help bring in the victory in society.

Wednesday, Thirty-seventh Week, Titus 3:9-15.

9 But shun foolish questionings, and genealogies, and strifes, and fightings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. 10 A factious man, after a first and second admonition refuse; 11 knowing that such a one is perverted, and sinneth, being self-condemned. 12 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, give diligence to come unto me to Nicopolis: for there I have determined to winter. 13 Set forward Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them. 14 And let our people also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful. 15 All that are with me salute thee. Salute them that love us in faith. Grace be with you all.

Practical, good work is far better than mere opinionative discussion. There is nothing more profitless than certain forms of mere argument, which has no real passion for humanity at the back of it. There are men who are ready at the slightest provocation to discuss, and contradict, anything.

The servant of Christ must avoid them. For there is a grave danger of substituting wrangling for true service.

And one is sometimes deluded into thinking that discussion is just as good as action. Besides, discussion after one sees what should be done may not only be evasion of duty, but it may mean the injury of the moral vision. When one plays with truth it may have the same effect upon the inner life as staring at the sun has upon the eyes. The human eyes were not made for staring at the sun, but to aid in walking by is light upon the common road.

Thursday, Thirty-seventh Week, Philemon 1-7.

1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved and fellow-worker, 2 and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the Church in thy house: 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 4 I thank my God always, making mention of thee in my prayers, 5 hearing of thy love, and of the faith which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints; 6 that the fellowship of thy faith may become effectual, in the knowledge of every good thing which is in you, unto Christ. 7 For I had much joy and comfort in thy love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through thee, brother.

St. Paul in his imprisonment at Rome had won Onesimus, a runaway slave, as a convert to Christ, and this beautiful letter was written by the apostle to Philemon, a Christian man living at Colosse, who was the master of Onesimus, asking him to receive his penitent, changed slave back again in the Christian spirit. St. Paul was no partisan. He loved Onesimus, the slave, and he also loved Philemon, the prosperous slave owner. The apostle was anxious that the slave should prove his Christianity by going back to his master. He was also anxious that Philemon should show his Christianity by the way in which he received him, while St. Paul revealed his own Christianity in his desire and attempt to reconcile both. For Christianity is the gospel of reconciliation. The true Christian leader will plead the cause of the weak and erring, who are really penitent, even if they have done wrong. He will not only bring them to Christ, he will try to fit them back into the social order. And the wise Christian worker will neither rail against employers, nor bow down weakly before them, but earnestly seek to have them exercise the spirit of Christ in the adjustment of

differences.

There can be no final settlement of anything until there is breadth of vision born of true sympathy to see the good on both sides.

Friday, Thirty-seventh Week, Philemon 8-15.

8 Wherefore, though I have all boldness in Christ to enjoin thee that which is befitting, 9 yet for love's sake I rather beseech, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus: 10 I beseech thee for my child, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus, 11 who once was unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable to thee and to me: 12 whom I have sent back to thee in his own person, that is, my very heart: 13 whom I would fain have kept with me, that in thy behalf he might minister unto me in the bonds of the gospel: 14 but without thy mind I would do nothing; that thy goodness should not be as of necessity, but of free will. 15 For perhaps he was therefore parted from thee for a season, that thou shouldest have him for ever.

It is the duty of the Church to appeal to employers as well as to plead with those who are employed, and that is not so difficult as it once was. Perhaps the difficulty is to exercise restraint in the appeal. For there may sometimes be a temptation to please the multitude by wild utterances against men in high places. The example of St. Paul reveals the true spirit, the spirit of Christian restraint, of kindly, yet firm, persuasion. In addressing those who are in places of power the modern democrat is tempted to think only of the Christianity that is in the end which he seeks, and to forget the Christianity which should be in the way he seeks it. It is the neglect of the Christian spirit in the attempt to solve problems that may be the cause of delay, complication, deepened class hatred, social despair.

Saturday, Thirty-seventh Week, Philemon 16-25.

16 No longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much rather to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord. 17 If then thou countest me a partner, receive him as myself. 18 But if he hath wronged thee at all, or oweth thee aught, put that to mine account; 19 I, Paul, write it with mine own

hand, I will repay it: that I say not unto thee that thou owest to me even thine own self besides. 20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my heart in Christ. 21 Having confidence in thine obedience I write unto thee, knowing that thou wilt do even beyond what I say. 22 But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I hope that through your prayers I shall be granted unto you. 23 Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus, saluteth thee; 24 and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke my fellow-workers. 25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Without attacking the institution of slavery, St. Paul appeals to Philemon to recognize in his slave one who is a brother. That is to say, he pleads for the transfiguration of the relationship through the exercise of the Christian spirit, and, of course, if that spirit prevailed in the relationship it ceased to be slavery.

While there is a great place for masculine thinking, and manly discussion, in our modern problems, there is a supreme place for the Christian atmosphere in which problems should be considered. The Christian atmosphere can dissolve problems which would still be far from a solution after any mere argument. But it is not necessarily a question of argument versus atmosphere; it is rather a question of argument plus the Christian atmosphere that our perplexing questions demand for their solution. And at the same time a willingness on the part of those who are exponents of progress to make genuine personal sacrifices for the cause. When St. Paul asked Philemon to charge to his account all that Onesimus owed he had gone a long way towards mastering the situation.

Sunday, Thirty-eighth Week, Romans 1:1-9.

1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, 2 which he promised afore through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures, 3 concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, 4 who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; even Jesus Christ our Lord, 5 through whom we received grace and apostleship, unto obedience of faith among all the nations, for his name's sake: 6 among whom are ye also, called to be Jesus Christ's: 7 to all that are in Rome,

beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world. 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you,

Every one knows that the Epistles of St. Paul are not placed in chronological order in the New Testament. But as the purpose of these comments does not cover the question of the date of authorship, or any other purely academic question, we are content to endeavor to grasp the meaning of the text in its application to life.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans differs from his other letters in its breadth and comprehensiveness. It was written to give emphasis to the Christian Gospel as a world message in its general relation to Judaism. There is a cosmopolitan grasp in the letter which was most appropriate in a message addressed to a Christian society living in the capital of the world.

The apostle begins by stating his own Christian standing. He was set apart, called to be an apostle, a servant of Jesus Christ. He identifies the Christ with the historical Jesus, and the historical Jesus with the Messianic hope of the Jews. And he recognizes that the living Christ received from God His place of supremacy, giving Him the right to direct His own world-wide campaign, calling men to receive the Grace of God, to become saints. The apostle indicates his profound interest in the faith of the Roman Christians, and expresses his thankfulness to God that their testimony has a universal influence, and such being the case he felt the strategic importance of intercession on their behalf.

Monday, Thirty-eighth Week, Romans 1:10-17.

always in my prayers 10 making request, if by any means now at length I may be prospered by the will of God to come unto you. 11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; 12 that is that I with you may be comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine. 13 And I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you (and was hindered hitherto), that I might have some fruit

in you also, even as in the rest of the Gentiles. 14 I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome. 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith.

St. Paul was not only a Christian, he was a statesman in the service of Christ. He had the large vision, a world-wide grasp of the problems confronting Christianity. He saw the importance of the Christian Church being strong and mature in its testimony in a center so supremely conspicuous as Rome. He had no timid uncertainty as to the power of the gospel to subdue and transfigure human nature in the headquarters of paganism. He had no shamefaced apology for bringing the little-known Christian message into the midst of institutions which were enthroned by time and political power.

St. Paul combined the breadth of view of the statesman with the passion and conviction and faith of the evangelist.

It is this combination that we sorely need in the enterprise of the Kingdom of God today; extensive and intensive vision, extensive and intensive spiritual achievement.

Divine Master: may I not be so intent upon the bringing of individuals to Thee that I shall lose sight of Thy world-wide purpose, and may I not be so occupied by the world vision that I shall neglect the problems near at hand. Teach me to obey the promptings of Thy Spirit who is seeking to expand my sympathies to individual and to universal concerns.

Tuesday, Thirty-eighth Week, Romans 1:18-32.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness; 19 because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that

they may be without excuse; 21 because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. 24 Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonoured among themselves: 25 for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. 26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile passions: for their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature: 27 and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due. 28 And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; whisperers, 30 backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful: 32 who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they that practise such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practise them.

The mere intellectual perception of truth will not save a character from destruction. It is possible to be intellectually wise and morally wicked. And such moral wickedness is all the greater since it is disobedient to light. And such disobedience blights the whole realm of the inner life. The process of moral decay turns thankfulness of spirit into cynicism, it degrades the imagination, it blinds the intuitive discernment of the heart. And beyond all that, those who are the victims of it are not aware that their intellectual wisdom without moral wisdom has branded them fools. When moral degeneration takes place in lives which have no surroundings to act as a restraint, as a conscience, as was the case in pagan Rome, then the moral decline is rapid, complete, unspeakable.

As one reads the natural history of disobedient souls in the midst of a society which offered no healthy resistance to their career as here outlined by St. Paul, the heart becomes sick with the fearful story, and at the same time thankful for that conscience which has been created by Christian civilization which today helps to save men from such awful depths almost in spite of themselves

Wednesday, Thirty-eighth Week, Romans 2:1-10.

1 Wherefore thou art without excuse, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost practise the same things. 2 And we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against them that practise such things. 3 And reckonest thou this, O man, who judgest them that practise such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? 4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentence? 5 but after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6 who will render to every man according to his works: 7 to them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life; 8 but unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation, 9 tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek; 10 but glory and honor and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Criticism of others sometimes takes the place of personal reformation. The intellectual faculties being keener than the moral sense, one sees with more vividness the actions of others than he sees his own character.

And because he sees the failings of others he is tempted to think it is vision proceeding from his superiority, whereas it is simply an abnormal mental keenness born of a mind which has ceased to be occupied with the moral problems of its own existence.

Criticism is often a temptation to cease to mind our own business, and in ceasing to mind our own business we forget how hard it is to live as we ought and we become uncharitable.

The whole question of judgment is in the hands of God, and when we leave it with Him we show not only our faith in Him, but we also keep our powers of discernment hitched to their proper tasks in the making of our own character, and we develop a true charity for the struggling failures of our fellows.

Heavenly Father: help me to keep my mind upon Thy will revealed in me by Thy Spirit, so that I shall not be free to critisize my neighbor but rather learn to sympathize with him in his trials and failures.

Thursday, Thirty-eighth Week, Romans 2:11-29.

11 For there is no respect of persons with God. 12 For as many as have sinned without the law shall also perish without the law; and as many as have sinned under the law shall be judged by the law; 13 for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified: 14 (for when Gentiles which have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are the law unto themselves; 15 in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them); 16 in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ. 17 But if thou bearest the name of a Jew, and restest upon the law, and gloriest in God, 18 and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law. 19 and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them that are in darkness, 20 a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth; 21 thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? 22 thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, does thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou rob temples; 23 thou who gloriest in the law, through thy transgression of the law dishonorest thou God? 24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you, even as it is written. 25 For circumcision indeed profiteth, if thou be a doer of the law: but if thou be a transgressor of the law, thy circumcision is become uncircumcision. 26 If therefore the uncircumcision keep

the ordinances of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision, 27 and shall not the uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who with the letter and circumcision art a transgressor of the law? 28 For he is not a Jew, who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: 29 but he is a Jew, who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

When we firmly believe that there is no respect of persons with God then so much of the abstruse theological discussion of a former generation which reflected upon the justice of God is silenced. And the fact of there being no respect of persons with God finds eloquent vindication in the scientific doctrine of the reign of law.

Every soul shall be judged according to his light, and according to St. Paul that was true of the Jew as well as of the Gentile. The superior religious knowledge of the Jew would not save him, so long as he was disobedient to the spirit of its teaching. While the man who had less knowledge but who was true to the knowledge he had, was far more in the line of the will of God than the man who had large religious knowledge but was false to its message. The modern application of that being that to be brought up in a Christian land with exalted Christian knowledge, and yet to be morally untrue to that knowledge, is to put one below the spiritual standing of a so-called heathen who is true to the native instincts of his soul.

Divine Master: I would not think that superior knowledge of Thy truth can save my soul, without obedience to its message. Help me to bear humbly in mind that Thou art no respector of persons, that only as I cooperate with Thy grace in daily sacrifice, can I hope for the sense of Thy presence and favor.

Friday, Thirty-eighth Week, Romans 3:1-9.

1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what is the profit of circumcision? 2 Much every way: first of all, that they were intrusted with the oracles of God. 3 For what if some were without faith? shall their want of faith

make of none effect the faithfulness of God? 4 God forbid: yea, let God be found true, but every man a liar; as it is written.

That thou mightest be justified in thy words,

And mightest prevail when thou comest into judgment. 5 But if our unrighteousness commendeth the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who visiteth with wrath? (I speak after the manner of men.) 6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world? 7 But if the truth of God through my lie abounded unto his glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? 8 and why not (as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), Let us do evil, that good may come? whose condemnation is just. 9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we before laid to the charge both of Jews and Greeks, that they are all under sin.

Because one who has high religious knowledge but is disobedient to it is not so good a man as he who is religiously ignorant but true to his light, it does not follow that to possess the highest and truest religious knowledge is of no consequence. For it is only through the possession of the highest revelation of truth that there is any hope for the moral progress of the world. For example, an educated rascal is worse than an ignorant one, but because of that fact we shall not make the foolish deduction that education is of no avail. While religious knowledge does not of itself make one more acceptable to God, yet it keeps the sense of the distance between the ideal and the actual before the mind of the individual and of the world. The highest religious knowledge creates a conscience, it keeps the world from moral stagnation, it develops the sense of sin, it is an abiding moral challenge.

Saturday, Thirty-eighth Week, Romans 3:10-20.

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none that understandeth, There is none that seeketh after God; 12 They have all turned aside, they are together become unprofitable; There is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one: 13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; With their tongues they have used deceit: The poison of asps is under their lips: 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways; 17

And the way of peace have they not known: 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God: 20 because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin.

The higher the revelation of religious truth the deeper is the sense of moral shortcoming. It was the fact of the revelation of the moral law in the Old Testament that made possible the awful indictment of human conduct as narrated in the passage before us. It was simply the deep shadow cast by the brilliant light. There is no such arraignment of human nature in the literature of ethnic religions, because there is no such revelation of moral law. There must be a conviction of moral shortcoming before there can be a sense of need for the divine assistance. And the moral law did that very thing, it brought home sin to the consciousness of men, so that all men who measure themselves by its standards are smitten with a sense of failure.

Sunday, Thirty-ninth Week, Romans 3:21-31.

21 But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is no distinction; 23 for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God; 24 being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; 25 whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to shew his righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; 26 for the showing, I say, of his righteousness at this present season; that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus. 27 Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a law of faith. 28 we reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. 29 Or is God the God of Jews only? is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also; 30 if so be that God is one, and he shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith. 31 Do we then make the law of none effect through faith?

God forbid; nay, we establish the law.

God educates the human race by the revelation of the moral law, which, having created in men a sense of moral shortcoming, must give place to some other influence which will save men from despair who have become consciously sinful through the knowledge of the law. Thus the law gives place to the gospel. The gospel becomes the next stage in the world's moral progress, for it tells of forgiveness for the sin of moral failure, and stirs the soul in its depths to a sense of gratitude, and gives a sense of personal relation to God in Christ through whom the gospel has come. And thus the gospel while saving the soul from the consequences of a sense of shortcoming raises it by personal association with Christ to a spiritual fulfilment of the law which formerly had only been a messenger of condemnation. Faith in Christ saves from the terrors of the law, and at the same time provides the moral dynamic for the fulfilment of its demands.

Monday, Thirty-ninth Week, Romans 4:1-12.

1 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather hath found, according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not toward God. 3 For what saith the scripture? And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. 4 Now to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned as of grace, but as of debt. 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness. 6 Even as David also pronounceth blessing upon the man, unto whom God reckoneth righteousness apart from works, 7 saying,

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven,
And whose sins are covered.

8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin.

9 Is this blessing then pronounced upon the circumcision, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say, To Abraham his faith was reckoned for righteousness. 10 How then was it reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision: 11 and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be in uncircumcision,

that righteousness might be reckoned unto them; 12 and the father of circumcision to them who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham which he had in uncircumcision.

Faith as the means of obtaining justification before God is not confined to the New Testament, it runs as a triumphant principle all through the Bible. Abraham in the various aspects of his life, in the various situations in which he found himself, exercised faith in God, and by the exercise of faith he achieved spiritual standing before God. Faith was the bond that bound him to all that God had to bestow upon him.

And it was not because he was a Jew, not because of any Jewish rite of circumcision, that he received the blessing of God. It was purely through the exercise of faith. The Jewish rite of circumcision was rather the outward symbol that he had already received the blessing of God. The modern application of this passage is simply that faith is of far more consequence, in order to obtain spiritual blessings, than belonging to any privileged race, or nation, or than resting in any mere ceremony for acceptance with God.

Heavenly Father: I thank Thee that Thou art offering forgiveness and a fresh start to all those who exercise faith, wherever or whoever they may be. I thank Thee that all the world may turn unto Thee and find peace through believing.

Tuesday, Thirty-ninth Week. Romans 4:13-25.

13 For not through the law was the promise to Abraham or to his seed, that he should be heir of the world, but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if they that are of the law are heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of none effect: 15 for the law worketh wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there transgression. 16 For this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace; to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all 17 (as it is written, A father of many nations have I made thee) before him whom he believed, even God, who giveth life to the dead, and calleth the

things that are not, as though they were. 18 Who in hope believed against hope, to the end that he might become a father of many nations, acording to that which had been spoken, So shall thy seed be. 19 And without being weakened in faith he considered his own body now as good as dead (he being about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb: 20 yea, looking unto the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God. 21 and being fully assured that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22 Wherefore also it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was reckoned unto him: 24 but for our sake, also, unto whom it shall be reckoned, who believe on him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25 who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification.

The fundamental relation between a soul and God is not established by moral achievement, it is consciously established by trust in the love of God made manifest through Jesus Christ. That is to say, we do not win our sonship by moral endeavor, we inherit it by faith. Sonship with God is not a prize awaiting the morally successful, it is a present fact to be turned into a working reality in life through the persistent exercise of faith in the character and word of God.

Faith will be assailed by all kinds of sinister suggestions, but if it staggers not through unbelief it will inevitably inherit all the promises of God. Faith must fight for its own. It must put down everything that would paralyze its grasp of divine realities. This is the battlefield of faith.

Heavenly Father: preserve my faith against all that assails it. Keep it from surrendering to the false voices which would discourage and destroy it. May my faith never stagger even when there is nothing to encourage it except Thy Holy Word; help me to be content with Thy promise.

Wednesday, Thirty-ninth Week, Romans 5:1-2.

1 Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; 2 through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Since faith is the means by which mankind enters into confident, glad, filial relations with God, then let us have peace with Him. Since Christ brings to us the grace of God, let us by faith enter into the enjoyment of all that it brings. Let us make it a blessed fact in the experience of this hour, that we are at peace with God. And when we enter into the confident enjoyment of peace, of having nothing between the soul and God, then we also are able to rejoice in all the coming blessings of eternity. When we are at peace with God, the thought of eternity ceases to inspire us with fear, with dread; on the contrary, the thought of eternity becomes an inspiration, a source of cheer. Eternity instead of being a mortgage upon present life, becomes an endowment of it.

Thursday, Thirty-ninth Week, Romans, 5:3-5.

3 And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh stedfastness; 4 and stedfastness approvedness; and approvedness, hope: 5 and hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us.

When eternity becomes a glorious reality to the soul, when it bears messages which fill the heart with transcendent hope, then present tribulation becomes more than bearable. Then some great characters like St. Paul can even glory in trouble. Instead of eternity becoming an enemy of strong, cheerful living amidst present hard facts, it makes lives strong and even radiant. It is a false use of the eternal world when it makes lives weak, and unpractical, in relation to the difficulties of our present common life in this world. God never meant that the future life should weaken our powers in dealing with this present life. God meant exactly the opposite, that those who had everlasting hopes should be the strongest, the most hopeful, the most patient, that the children of Christian hope should keep the heart of the world from growing old.

Divine Master: may the things which Thou art preparing for me in eternity not make me a sad and dreary person in the midst of common duties and trials, but rather may the

thought of what Thou art preparing for me make me heroic in present difficulty, gracious in trial, tender and strong in sympathy and service.

Friday. Thirty-ninth Week, Romans, 5:6-11.

6 For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die. 8 But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him. 10 For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life; 11 and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

It is not because of any inherent superiority on the part of the Christian that his life is filled with eternal hopes and with the joys arising out of them, it is all of a divine grace. Christ gave His life for the worst of men, because He saw the moral possibilities of all. He read beneath the ordinary human judgments of good and bad, and saw the infinite value of any soul. The problem of Christ was the moral recovery of all lives, bringing them back into the normal order. And in the achievement of this great end there are two stages—the reconciliation of the soul to God, and its spiritual development. Christ reconciles the soul to God through His death, and He spiritually develops it through the soul's fellowship with His living presence, and such possibilities are open to all men.

Saturday, Thirty-ninth Week, Romans 5:12-21.

12 Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned:— 13 for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come. 15 But not as the trespass, so also is the free gift.

For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many. 16 And not as through one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment came of one unto condemnation, but the free gift came of many trespasses unto justification. 17 For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ. 18 So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. 19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous. 20 And the law came in besides, that the trespass might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly: 21 that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sunday, Fortieth Week, Romans 6:1-4.

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

The grace of God is not a message of good-natured indulgence towards disobedient lives who are content to save their souls from future penalties while they live in the present in indolent trust in the divine goodness. That is a travesty of the gospel. If it were true, it would cast reflections upon the charactr of God, for it would be a scheme to cut the nerve of character, and at the same time to lull the soul to sleep with thoughts of God whose love had no ethical reality.

But the purpose of God in the gospel of His grace is diametrically opposed to moral lethargy. The gospel exists in order that men who are conscious of their sins may here and now get away from them, from their tyranny and threatening. The gospel is the glorious message of a fresh

start for those who are broken-hearted over their failures, and long to walk in newness of life. The gospel is not an escape from character, it establishes the very foundations of renewed character.

As sin and its consequences proceed from universal facts in human nature, as sin is not something confined to one nation, is not the peculiarity of any one race, but is a world-wide characteristic, therefore so must redemption proceed upon universal principles. It is only consistency with the great truth that there is no respect of persons with God. If sin is a universal fact, then salvation must also be a universal message. Christ is not merely the divine answer to the needs of one race of men, He is the divine answer to the needs of all races. Christ stands over against the large, elemental, human shortcomings, with the dynamic of universal, moral and spirtual recovery and progress.

Monday, Fortieth Week, Romans 6:5-13.

5 For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin; 7 for he that hath died is justified from sin. 8 But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; 9 knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him. 10 For the death that he died, he died unto sin once: but the life that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11 Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof: 13 neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

To participate in the grace of God means to die to the old life, it is to put the cross of Christ between oneself and the entire past. It is to disenfranchise the past, to dare to reckon the ambitions and habits and desires of the sinful past as dead. To dare to forget the things which are behind by the bold venture of faith. And to participate in the gospel of divine grace also means the springing up of the new

life within the soul, the Christ life, the resurrection life, the life that shall never die. And that life grows as room is given it to expand, as its instincts live in the atmosphere of the presence of God through communion, as its instincts are obeyed in thought and conduct. The double process of death and life go on in the soul at the same time, and the health of the renewed life depends upon the completeness of the abandonment of the old life. The whole process is possessed by the exactitude of biological law.

Heavenly Father: may I be able to reckon the old life as dead. May I have the determination to make the crucifixion complete, through surrender to the instincts of the renewed life. I would have the eternal life in me bring every thought into captivity to the mind of Christ.

Last eve I paused beside a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he; and then, with twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

And so, thought I, the anvil of God's Word
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed—the hammers gone.

SECTION X.

Epistle to the Romans

Tuesday, Fortieth Week. Romans 6:14-23.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace.
15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid. 16 Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; 18 and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness. 19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye presented your members as servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now present your members as servants to righteousness unto sanctification. 20 For when ye were servants of sin, ye were free in regard of righteousness. 21 What fruit then had ye at that time in the things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. 22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The gospel when it is received into an honest heart means freedom, not freedom to sin, but freedom from the dominion of sin. The despotism of sin has ceased in its various forms. That does not imply perfection, perfection would imply unerring judgment. It simply means that the Christian is free from the tyranny of an old principle of life which has been superseded by a new principle. Freedom from sin has been realized by servitude to righteousness.

The result of the dominion of sin in a life is moral contraction of personality, the narrowing of one's world down to the things of time and sense, death; while the

consequence of the reign of the law of righteousness is the expansion of personality, correspondence with more and more of the eternal world, one's world becoming more spacious, and fellowship with it becoming more real, intimate, joyous.

Wednesday. Fortieth Week, Romans 7:1-14.

1 Or are ye ignorant, brethren (for I speak to men that know the law), that the law hath dominion over a man for so long time as he liveth? 2 For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband. 3 So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man. 4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to another, even to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God. 5 For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 6 But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were held; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet: 8 but sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment all manner of coveting: for apart from the law sin is dead. 9 And I was alive apart from the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died; 10 and the commandment, which was unto life, this I found to be unto death; 11 for sin, finding occasion, through the commandment beguiled me, and through it slew me. 12 So that the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good. 13 Did then that which is good become death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might be shewn to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good:—that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful. 14 for we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.

The moral law had a great function to fulfil, it made

men understand the meaning of sin, it brought home to them the sense of personal guilt. But having fulfilled that enormously important function, the law must give place to Christ in order that the sin-stricken soul may progress from a sense of sin to a sense of peace and achievement. Without Christ the law could do nothing more for one who has received the sense of sin. It could not relieve the sense of sin, it could not live the life to realize its own moral demands. So that if the end that was in view by the institution of the law is to be reached, then those who were under its instruction must pass on to receive the message of Christ, ignoring the law because its teaching has been absorbed in the larger revelation of Christ. The transition from law to grace is thus demanded in the interests of moral progress.

Thursday, Fortieth Week, Romans 7:15-25.

15 For that which I do I know not: for not what I would, that do I practice; but what I hate, that I do. 16 But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is good. 17 So now it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. 18 For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not. 19 For the good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practice. 20 But if what I would not, that I do, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. 21 I find then the law, that, to me who would do good, evil is present. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then I myself with the mind indeed, serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

While the mind assents to the reality and majesty of the moral law it cannot rise to its demands, because of the strength of the lower nature. The moral law makes a demand which the mind recognizes to be right, and at the same time the baser self defeats the desire to realize this moral imperative. However, the desire to do accord-

ing to what one knows to be right is a great step toward Christ, although the knowledge of right plus the desire to do right only intensifies the agony of failure. It was in such circumstances that St. Paul discovered—and many others have discovered since—the supreme place for Christ in the unequal moral struggle within. And when one knows the agony of moral failure, and the all-sufficiency of Christ dawns upon the disconsolate mind, then there is an instinctive feeling of gratitude to God. But thanksgiving to God can only spring out of a heart that has known the reality of shortcoming and the coming of divine aid.

Divine Master, I have learned what I ought to do, and have had strong desire to do it, yet my mind and heart have been smitten by a sense of failure. But in my sorrow Thou hast made my heart to sing by the coming of Thy peace and power.

Friday, Fortieth Week, Romans 8:1-4.

1 There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. 3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh: 4 that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

We speak with more or less scientific accuracy of the law of heredity, but there is in Christ working by the Holy Spirit in us an antithetic heredity. It is not a breach of natural law, it is the confirmation of it. One law supersedes another law. We see this plainly in nature. The law at work in the ascending airship cancels the law of gravitation. And the power that is in Christ introduced into our lives through obedience to the promptings of the Holy Spirit cancels the operation of the law of sin, which is a kind of gravitation in the moral sphere. And this triumphant law working within the believer achieves so much more than the moral law of "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not," for it is not a mere negative message of condemnation, it is the realization of what the moral code

demands but does not help in bringing about.

Saturday, Fortieth Week, Romans 8:5-13.

5 For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit. 6 For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the spirit is life and peace: 7 because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be: 8 and they that are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: 13 for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

The consent of the mind to the promptings of the lower nature becomes carnal-mindedness, though the outward life and reputation may not be involved in the process of inner deterioration. Thoughts are the formation of character, and the presence or absence of spirituality all depends upon which power has captured and is dominating the mind, whether the baser self, or the will of the Holy Spirit. The continual supremacy of the flesh or spirit determines the tendency of character. And tendency is one of the great words in the realm of character. It is a blessed fact that if the tendency of the mind is downward it may be changed by surrender to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. But that attitude of mental obedience must be maintained, and as it is maintained the tendency of character is reversed.

Divine Spirit, I thank Thee that Thou art willing to take possession of my thoughts. I here and now give Thee my mind that it may obey Thy suggestions. Keep me faithful, preserve me from carelessness, disobedience, so that I may indeed be spiritually minded.

Sunday, Forty-first Week, Romans 8:14-17.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: 17 and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him.

As one yields his inner life to the Holy Spirit potential Christian character is changed into the actual experiences of a son of God. Certain facts begin to dawn upon the mind. There is a sense of the divine Fatherhood. There is the sense of being a son, confirmed by the voice of the Spirit. There is also the sense of being an heir, of having an inheritance, of having great and glorious prospects. This spiritual consciousness is simply the gradual unfolding of the normal Christian life. For the Christian life has a natural history, having distinct instincts and intuitions just as any other life has. The instinct for summer is in the swallow. Every form of life has its peculiar instincts. And most of all the soul of man has instincts which reveal themselves in the unfolding of the inner life. It is all perfectly natural, and inevitable, if the soul is moving toward its true destiny.

Monday, Forty-first Week, Romans 8:18-25.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23 And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. 24 For in hope were we saved; but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth? 25 But if we hope for

that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

The expansion of the spiritual life is a painful process, that is to say, it is an achievement in the face of subtle, and continued, opposition. It is a perpetual battle, but the results make the battle far more than worth while. For there will be a revelation of divine glory in the believer, not to his eyes, it will not be a mere spectacle to look at, but a personal experience, a personal experience wrought within oneself of transfigured life. All the created world waits for that great consummation. The spiritual triumph, the moral completeness, of the human soul is the crown and flower of creation. The whole story of the travail of nature finds its meaning, and climax, in what shall be achieved in human souls. For the present, that work of the spirit of God within is veiled by the physical life, with its frailties, its limitations. But when the body is cast aside, having served its purpose, then shall be revealed that abiding reality —the triumphant immortal soul clothed with its spiritual body.

Tuesday, Forty-first Week, Romans 8:26-27.

26 And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; 27 and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Not only does the Spirit of God develop the soul of man in the direction of human relationships. He also urges the soul Godward. He not only expands character towards visible, practical, social realities, but also towards the eternal. The Spirit prompts us to pray, and we may be disobedient to that prompting as well as to the suggestion that we do an act of human kindness.

The Spirit is the greater intercessor, and He engages in the ministry of intercession through those lives who are obedient to His overtures. It is not enough to obey the Spirit's impulse to give to missions, we must also obey His pleadings that we become the channel of His inter-

cessions. And we cannot plead that we do not know how to engage in that vastly important ministry, for if we lend our minds and hearts to Him He will pray through us. We must exercise faith that the Spirit prays through us as well as that He speaks through us.

Wednesday, Forty-first Week, Romans 8:28-39.

28 And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren: 30 and whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; 34 who is he that condemneth? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 Even as it is written,

For Thy sake we are killed all the day long;
We were accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Nothing can defeat the predestined purpose of God in the lives of His obedient children. He predestined them to be conformed to the image of Christ. And no intrigue of men, no human hatred, no severity of the elements of nature, no storm, or famine, or disease, can injure the work of God in a true believer. Nay, more than that, every apparent conspiracy against a God-possessed life can only succeed in making it more Godlike. The Christian is not only a conqueror, he is more than a con-

queror, for the force flung against him becomes part of his strength. The weapon thrown at him becomes part of his armor. But while the so-called misfortunes of life are making some more refined, more gracious, more Christlike, the same influences are making others hard and cynical. It all depends upon whether the Spirit has been permitted to shed abroad the love of God in the heart.

Thursday. Forty-first Week, Romans 9:1-5.

1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen accord to the flesh; 4 who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; 5 whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

So glorious was the standing of the Christian believer in the estimate of St. Paul, and so deep was his love for his fellow Hebrews, that he was prepared for the most dreadful of experiences if he could help them to share in the blessings of the gospel. A great love for one's fellows, and a great sense of what Christ bestows upon the soul, are the elements in a true enthusiasm in Christian service. And it must be great drudgery, unless one has these influences acting upon his work, turning it into a holy passion.

It is when one knows from his own experience the vast difference that Christ has made in his own life, and when he sees what his dissatisfied, and disillusioned fellow men have missed, and when he has a deep conviction about it that one is ready to make sacrifices in order to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ wherever he is called to render his service.

Divine Spirit, May I be so possessed by Thy power that the gospel of Christ shall become more real to me, and by the sense of the loss my fellowmen suffer without Christ that I shall be ready for whatever sacrifice may be necessary in order to proclaim the message of grace.

Friday, Forty-first Week, Romans 9:6-13.

6 But it is not as though the word of God hath come to nought. For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel: 7 neither, because they are Abraham's seed, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8 That is, it is not the children of the flesh that are children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed. 9 For this is a word of promise, According to this season will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. 10 And not only so; but Rebecca also having conceived by one, even by our father Isaac—11 for the children being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, 12 it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. 13 Even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.

St. Paul here declares that there are two kinds of children of Abraham, those who are descendants according to the flesh, and those who are his actual children through the exercise of that same faith which swayed his life.

And it may be said in the same way that there are two kinds of Christians: those who have been born in Christian lands, who bear the Christian name, who accept the Christian creed, but have neither the Christian spirit nor the Christian experience; while on the other hand, there are those who are Christ's true disciples, having His spirit and an experience of His grace; they may live in heathen surroundings, they may have very imperfect knowledge of the truths of Christianity, but the living marks of true discipleship are upon them.

Divine Master, May I not deceive myself into thinking that the Christian privileges in the midst of which I live make me of themselves a Christian. Keep me ever remembering that only as Thy life grows in me, as I live in obedient union with Thee, only thus am I really Thy disciple.

Saturday, Forty-first Week, Romans 9:14-24.

14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. 15 For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. 16 So then it is

not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy. 17 For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, For this very purpose did I raise thee up, that I might shew in thee my power, and that my name might be published abroad in all the earth. 18 So then he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth.

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He still find fault? For who withstandeth his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why didst thou make me thus? 21 Or hath not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part of a vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? 22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction; 23 and that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory, 24 even us, whom he also called, not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles?

The sovereignty of God makes it impossible for any race, or sect, to claim a monopoly of His favor and mercy. The Hebrew race could not claim an exclusive appropriation of spiritual blessings. The divine sovereignty refuses to be narrowed down to the narrow limits of men's arbitrary constructions. And the sovereignty of God is a great reality in the consciousness of the believer. The reign of Christ in the soul is the reign of the sovereignty of God. It is the practical carrying out of the supremacy of the divine will and purpose in human life. And the practical attitude towards it is to bow before it rather than to discuss the metaphysical relation of it to the sense of freedom. It is enough to be conscious of the fact, and to trust the reliability of our consciousness, that we are free to live under the sovereign will of God.

Sunday, Forty-second Week, Romans 9:25-33.

25 As he saith also in Hosea,
I will call that my people, which was not my people;
And her beloved, that was not beloved,
26 And it shall be, that in the place where it was said
unto them, Ye are not my people.
There shall they be called sons of the living God.

27 And Isaiah crieth concerning Israel, If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that shall be saved: 28 for the Lord will execute his word, upon the earth, finishing it and cutting it short. 29 And, as Isaiah hath said before,

Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed,
We had become as Sodom, and had been made like unto Gomorrah.

30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, who followed not after righteousness, attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith: 31 but Israel, following after a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. 32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by works. They stumbled at the stone of stumbling; 33 even as it is written,

Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence:

And he that believeth on him shall not be put to shame.

The Hebrew people clung to their narrower conception of righteousness, against the revelation of the larger purpose of God to make men righteous by faith. And by so doing, they not only failed to realize righteousness in their own national life, but they ceased to be the point of contact between the revelation of God and the need of the world. God has again and again had to reveal His progressive purpose to the world through what might be called an outside agency. The people who should have been the natural channel of divine expression were too obtuse, too much enslaved, and blinded, by tradition to grasp the fresh message of God, and God had to choose channels which were not so enslaved, who, with all their faults and crudities, were alert to the divine mind upon the particular message He would communicate. How much fresh light has broken in upon the world through what has been called outside, irregular, channels!

Divine Spirit, May I not be so enslaved by the past, by the letter, that I shall fail to grasp the meaning of Thy message in the present. Keep me from persecuting, from making it harder for those who have vision and courage enough to translate Thy purposes in the common life of today.

Monday, Forty-second Week, Romans 10:1-8.

1 Brethren , my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth. 5 For Moses writeth that the man that doeth the righteousness which is of the law shall live thereby. 6 But the righteousness which is of faith saith thus, Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down:) 7 or, Who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach:

An individual, a sect, a nation, may be exceedingly zealous on behalf of ideas which have no place in the divine purpose for the present time. Earnestness of purpose may be associated with the gravest errors. It is possible to fight hard for ideas which are entirely out of touch with the needs of the time. It is also possible to be sighing for a power to come into the midst of the problems of the world, when that power is already there. The Hebrews of St. Paul's day were earnestly attached to a form of religious life which had been superseded by the revelation of Christ. They were looking for a deliverer to come who had already appeared. He was in their midst.

But that is also true today in the Christian Church. There are many now whose religious ideas and life are pre-Christian, they live as if Christ had not come. There are many who are waiting for Christ to come into their lives in the form of an experience which they have pictured to their minds. And because He does not come according to that preconceived notion, they think He has not yet come. But as a matter of fact He is with them now, and His presence is a call for faith.

Tuesday, Forty-second Week, Romans 10:9-12.

9 because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus

as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: 10 for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame. 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him:

The Christ of history and the Christ of Christian experience are one. And the Christ of inner experience must also become the Christ who is outwardly confessed. To fail to publicly avow Christ as the Lord of our life is to fail to let Christ come into His own in us. It is to control Christ rather than to let Christ control us. It is to arrest His rule in us. There is a most vital relation between inner, secret faith in Christ and outward testimony concerning Him. Testimony confirms faith. It confirms even the intellectual process of trust. It makes the truth of believing clearer to the mind. And testimony commits the character to Christlikeness. It demands consistency. It compels the soul to watch and pray. And there is no adequate substitute for that compulsion.

Wednesday, Forty-second Week, Romans 10:13-21.

13 For, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!

16 But they did not all hearken to the glad tidings. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? 17 So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. 18 But I say, Did they not hear? Yea, verily,

Their sound went out into all the earth,
And their words unto the ends of the world.

19 But I say, Did Israel not know? First Moses saith,

I will provoke you to jealousy with that which is no nation,
With a nation void of understanding will I anger you.

20 And Isaiah is very bold, and saith,
I was found of them that sought me not;
I became manifest unto them that asked not of me.
21 But as to Israel he saith, All the day long did I spread out my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

Christianity is a world religion both in the purpose of God and in the inherent needs of humanity. And all who exercise faith in Christ, will immediately find the redeeming power of divine grace at work in character.

Therefore, the responsibility of knowing the power and purpose of Christ is absolute. No Christian dare ignore the obligation of propagandism. To take a definite part in the problems of the spreading of the gospel is a vital part of personal religion. It is not optional, personal inclination has nothing to do with the case. Every Christian must take his share in the world's program of Christ. His personal spiritual development is bound up in it. What sphere he shall occupy, which phase of the vast undertaking he shall be directly in touch with is a matter to be decided by inner obedience and outward providences. But the solemn fact is that every believer must have some share in some form in the evangelization of the world.

Thursday, Forty-second Week, Romans 11:1-6.

1 I say then, Did God cast off his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God did not cast off his people which he foreknew. Or know ye not what the Scripture saith of Elijah? how he pleadeth with God against Israel. 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, they have digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have left for myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 But if it is by grace, it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.

St. Paul recognized that there was a section of his race which had true spiritual discernment. He did not fail to

see realty where it existed. He conquered the temptation, to which all enthusiasts are liable, to condemn without discrimination. The apostle saw those in the Jewish church who were living above and beyond the system to which they belonged. It is always a mark of true leadership to be able to see the best in that system with which he himself is not associated, and concerning which he has strong convictions. To have strong views concerning the error in another system, and yet not to be blind to truth that is in it, to recognize those in the system who are above it is to be the best helper of the situation. Sometimes the cause of Christ is injured by the lack of the recognition of this principle, on the part of those who have strong convictions, but who lack large discernment.

Friday, Forty-second Week, Romans 11:7-17.

7 What then? That which Israel seeketh for, that he
obtained not; but the election obtained it, and the rest
were hardened: 8 according as it is written, God gave
them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see,
and ears that they should not hear, unto this very day.
9 And David saith,

Let their table be made a snare, and a trap,
And a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them:
10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see,
And bow thou down their back always.

11 I say then, Did they stumble that they might fall?
God forbid: but by their fall salvation is come unto the
Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy. 12 Now if
their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss
the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness?
13 But I speak to you that are Gentiles. Inasmuch
then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my min-
istry: 14 if by any means I may provoke to jealousy
them that are my flesh, and may save some of them. 15
For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the
world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from
the dead? 16 And if the first fruit is holy, so is the
lump: and if the root is holy, so are the branches. 17 But
if some of the branches were broken off, and thou being
a wild olive, wast grafted in among them, and didst be-
come partaker with them of the root of the fatness of the
olive tree:

The apostle contends that the failure of the Jews to rise to the purposes of God in them, and through them, is not to be looked upon as an unmixed evil. The sovereignty of God would turn it to high uses. It would be the occasion for the spiritual enrichment of the Gentiles, and the enrichment of the Gentiles would act as a spur upon the Jews to seek once more that which they had rejected.

Faith in God thus leads us to look for the providence which may be working through an individual or national failure, or even sin. For example, the overruling Providence of God turned the sinful life of Augustine into one of conspicuous sanctity and service. Great sinners have been turned into great saints, perhaps all the greater saints because of the deep penitence over great sin. But this does not indicate that such a life is as acceptable in the sight of God as one who had never wandered into deep transgression. It simply indicates that God overrules sin by making it serve His larger purpose.

Saturday, Forty-second Week, Romans 11:18-25.

18 Glory not over the branches: but if thou gloriest, it is not thou that bearest the root, but the root thee. 19 Thou wilt say then, Branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. 20 Well; by their unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by thy faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: 21 for if God spared not the natural branches, neither will he spare thee. 22 Behold then the goodness and severity of God: toward them that fell, severity; but toward thee, God's goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. 23 And they also, if they continue not in their unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if thou wast cut out of that which is by nature a wild olive tree, and wast grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

25 For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

The Gentiles are here warned against pride on account

of their spiritual advantage over the Hebrews. It required great humility and obedience for the Gentiles to escape the same temptation which overtook the Jews. While they were boasting they might be going the same way. The same temptation comes to some young Christians to be spiritually proud and critical, toward older Christians, who may lack their keen vision and enthusiasm, and the fruit of such attitudes is often harsh and unbecoming censure, which unconsciously undermines their own spiritual reality.

Spiritual pride has been the beginning of spiritual decline both in individuals and in churches. And the superior air which has been developed as the fruit of pride has driven Christians and churches apart, and the whole problem of Christian unity has been made more difficult and its solution more distant.

Sunday, Forty-third Week, Romans 11:26-36.

26 and so all Israel shall be saved; even as it is written,
There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer;
He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:
27 And this is my covenant unto them,
When I shall take away their sins.
28 As touching the Gospel, they are enemies for your sake: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake. 29 For the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of. 30 For as ye in time past were disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by their disobedience, 31 even so have these also now been disobedient, that by the mercy shewn to you they also may now obtain mercy. 32 For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all
33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? 35 or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36 For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen.

Although the Hebrew people rejected the gospel, the apostle here expresses strong faith in their final turning to it. And the Gentile world should be an inspiration in

that direction.

The Gentile owes the Jew much. And it should be distressing to every Christian heart to see and hear of the unfairness with which the Jew is treated in certain parts of so-called Christendom.

We owe the Jew the gospel, and all also owe him the merciful fruits of the gospel. The attitude of Christians toward Jews should include as part of the evangelical program Christian conduct as well as Christian teaching. And criticism can never take the place of self-sacrificing efforts to pay the debt to the Jews, whose religious history and genius have helped to make the Gentile world what it is. Self-complacent superiority can be no part of the attitude of Christians who were lifted out of pagan darkness by the gospel of divine mercy not so very long ago as human progress reckons time. Christian leadership would be greatly strengthened if there were men of the same calibre who would reciprocate the service of the Jewish St. Paul who gave his life for Gentiles.

Monday, Forty-third Week, Romans 12:1-2.

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. 2 And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

The apostle here turns from large, comprehensive views of God's world purposes to consider individual Christian character and conduct. What has gone before is not distinct and separate from what is now under consideration. They are vitally connected. The doctrines of divine grace have their fruit in the highest character and conduct of the individual soul. To be the object of God's redeeming power is to be a pioneer of human progress. And before a Christian can become a factor in the progress of the world, God must have possession of the whole man. His physical life must be a conductor of the spirit of Christ. It is through the bodily life that terminal connections are made with reality. Every physical mood, and appetite, must be under the control of Christ if the

body is to play a Christian part. And in order to have the body do its effective work, it must be acted upon by a mind that is equally disciplined in its concentrated attention to the mind of Christ.

Divine Master, I would yield my body to Thee, that it may be a channel fit for Thy use. May no excess mar it, and may no indolence dull its agile response to Thy summons.

Tuesday, Forty-third Week, Romans 12:3-8.

3 For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith. 4 For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office; 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another. 6 And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; 7 or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching; 8 or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting; he that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

When the human mind is under the control of the divine Spirit there is no place for proud thoughts. Proud thoughts are born when the mind has run away from its task. And when the mind is obedient, it attends to its own business, it recognizes its own sphere of work. It does not try to do everything. It is true to its own gift. It is conscious of being responsible for one thing, and has no time to compare its importance with the exercise of some other gift. And it is through this mental concentration and obedience that variety of service is secured, each being true to his own talent. The criterion of true service is not mere inclination, but obedience to the divine mind. And it is thus that unity of spirit is secured amid the variety of occupation.

Divine Spirit, Help me to listen to Thy voice caling me to the service Thou hast for me. Keep me from being critical of the service of others by the concentration of my mind upon my own work. And may I be content with Thy work for me, and not envious of the work given to another to do.

Wednesday, Forty-third Week, Romans 12:9-21.

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. 10 In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another; 11 in diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing stedfastly in prayer; 13 communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality. 14 Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not. 15 Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep. 16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits. 17 Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men. 18 If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men. 19 Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God; for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord. 20 But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

The Christian is called upon to be in a right relation to his own body through discipline, to his own mind through concentration, to his own work by humbly keeping to the exercise of his own gift, and also to be in right relation to his neighbor by the exercise of Christian goodwill. Kindness is to be a fact in the heart and not merely an attitude of the manner. And kindness in the heart is to make connections with the outside world through kindness of manner. Brusqueness of manner is not to hide the fact of the kind heart, any more than kindness of manner is to be a substitute for it.

Christian sympathy must know no churlish reserves of feeling or ungenerous withholding of expression. It must

be able to so far rise above self-consciousness as to rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. And that does not necessarily border upon insincerity so long as it is not a mere piece of acting, but the gracious self-forgetting attitude of putting oneself in another's place, which is first an act of the imagination and then of the sympathies. Imagination is the inspirer of sympathy.

Thursday, Forty-third Week, Romans 13:1-14.

1 Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same: 4 for he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil. 5 Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience sake. 6 For for this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing. 7 Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

8 Owe no man anything, save to love one another; for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. 9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. 10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law.

11 And this, knowing the season, that already it is time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed. 12 The night is far spent, and the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk becomingly, as in the day; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh,

to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Christianity is the inspirer of patriotism, for it teaches that the state is a providence of God to the individual. Lack of patriotism is a failure to recognize the state as an instrument of God. The state cannot injure a good man in any real sense, it may be severe and even harsh, but to those who are right towards God all things work together for good. The state has a divine sanction which the Christian must be swift to recognize and to accept with becoming submission. And one of the first things which every man owes to the state is that he shall not sin against individuals who compose the state. Every sin against one's neighbor is a blow at the state, for it tends to complicate social problems and to retard progress.

And the motive for submission to the state, and for Christian behavior to one's neighbor, given here by St. Paul, is the nearness of the eternal world, the speedy coming of the great consummation.

Divine Master, As Thy servant may I render patriotic service to my country, and in seeking to do this in large affairs may I not forget my duty in Christian behavior to individuals. May no injustice to individuals cancel my efforts to serve the state.

Friday, Forty-third Week, Romans 14:1-23.

1 But him that is weak in faith receive ye, yet not for decision of scruples. 2 One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs. 3 Let not him that eateth set at nought him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. 4 Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own lord he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be made to stand; for the Lord hath power to make him stand. 5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind. 6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: and he that eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks: and he that eateth not, unto the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. 7 For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself. 8 For whether we live, we

live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. 9 For to this end Christ died, and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. 10 But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother? or thou again, why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God. 11 For it is written,

As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow,
And every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God.

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling. 14 I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean of itself: save that to him who accounteth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. 15 For if because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou walkest no longer in love. Destroy not with thy meat him for whom Christ died. 16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of: 17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 For he that herein serveth Christ is well-pleasing to God, and approved of men. 19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another. 20 Overthrow not for meat's sake the work of God. All things indeed are clean; howbeit it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. 21 It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth. 22 The faith which thou hast have thou to thyself before God. Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that which he approveth. 23 But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

Just as the infant Jesus had to be protected against harm so that He might grow up to protect, so must the beginnings of the divine life in young Christians be protected. Strong Christians must be the protectors of weaker Christians. And because weaker brethren cannot do, without injury to their conscience and spiritual life, what others can do they are not, therefore, to be ridiculed for narrowness. On the other hand, those who abstain from certain things not in themselves wrong must not assume the attitude of censoriousness toward those

who do not agree with them. They must give the same charity which they expect.

It is well to remember that we often have the future spiritual welfare of the young in our keeping by the example which we show them. Christian liberty must often be subdued into Christian consideration for others. The assertion of liberty, after all, is not so high an attitude toward our fellows as the practice of sacrifice.

Blessed Lord and Master, Who wast protected by love and strength in the lonely manger, help me to protect the beginnings of divine life in all young people. May no example of mine injure their souls. May no act of mine make it difficult for them to grow up into Thy likeness.

Saturday, Forty-third Week, Romans 15:1-13.

1 Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each one of us please his neighbor for that which is good, unto edifying. 3 For Christ also pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me. 4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope. 5 Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus: 6 that with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Wherefore receive ye one another, even as Christ also received you, to the glory of God. 8 For I say that Christ hath been made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, that he might confirm the promises given unto the fathers, 9 and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written,

Therefore will I give praise unto thee among the Gentiles,
And sing unto Thy name.

10 And again he saith,
Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

11 And again,
Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles;
And let all the peoples praise him.

12 And again, Isaiah saith,

There shall be the root of Jesse,
And he that ariseth to rule over the Gentiles;
On him shall the Gentiles hope.

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is not a Christian spectacle to see those who abstain from certain things, not sinful in themselves, and those who do not so abstain, in two separate camps pouring ridicule or censure upon each other. It may greatly injure the cause of Christ. We are all the recipients of the mercy of God in Christ. None of us can boast, it is by divine grace that we are what we are. And this supreme fact should unite us in a common attitude of adoration and praise to Him who hath loved us and given Himself for us. As the apostle, in the passage before us, pleads for unity between Jewish and Gentile Christians even although they had different views regarding food and drink, so in our own day the things upon which there is room for diversity of opinion must not be drawn into a place of supreme importance to the injury of our Christian fellowship and at the same time tending to eclipse the presence of our Lord. It is not argument that will finally settle these questions, but the presence and spirit of the Master inclining hearts to deny themselves for the spiritual good of others.

Sunday, Forty-fourth Week, Romans 15:14-24.

14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. 15 But I write the more boldly unto you in some measure, as putting you again in remembrance, because of the grace that was given me of God, 16 that I should me a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17 I have therefore my glorifying in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God. 18 For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed, 19 in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Ghost; so that from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyri-

cum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ; 20 yea, making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation; 21 but, as it is written.

They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came,
And they who have not heard shall understand.

22 Wherefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you: 23 but now, having no more any place in these regions, and having these many years a longing to come unto you, 24 whensoever I go unto Spain (for I hope to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first in some measure I shall have been satisfied with your company).

St. Paul's commission as an apostle to the Gentiles, his successful service as a pioneer preacher of the universal gospel, gave him the right to address the Roman Christians upon individual conduct and upon the elemental principles of Christianity. He was not a meddlesome person, and he would not be considered such. He might be unknown personally to the church at home, but their cause was his cause. He was bound to be interested in the Church beyond the sphere of his personal associations, for the whole world-wide work was a unity, and whatever was close to the heart of his Master in the problem of the extension of the Kingdom was his urgent concern. The man who takes St. Paul's stand for an interest in the cause of Christ far beyond his immediate locality or country and beyond his own denominational connection, may have to suffer some criticism, but he is simply carrying out the Christian Spirit. Interest in the purely local cause may degenerate into professionalism, while the world interest gives more zest and vision for the local work.

Monday, Forty-fourth Week, Romans 15:25-29.

25 But now, I say, I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints. 26 For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem. 27 Yea, it hath been their good pleasure; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them also to minister unto them in carnal things. 28 When therefore I have accom-

plished this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will go on by you unto Spain. 29 And I know that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ.

A world view of the purpose of Christ did not make St. Paul forgetful of the local poor. He was concerned that the poor at Jerusalem should have bread, and that the people in Spain should have the gospel. It was all part of one program. It is so still. And those who would separate the two causes, local social service and world-wide evangelism, have not so learned Christ. What God hath joined together let no man put asunder. It is not a suggestion of choice between the local cause and the universal, it is a comprehensive grasp of both of them. And in order to do it in the thorough manner in which the early Church started out to do it, there will no doubt require to be a loud call for the conversion of gifts, into the service of Christ, which have been lying idle, or which the Church has failed to use because there was no sphere recognized or provided for their exercise. And there need be no lowering of the spiritual tone in the expansion of the life of the Church to the breadth of the apostolic times. St. Paul is just as much the servant of Christ on the way to Jerusalem with money for the poor as on the way to Spain with the gospel. But let us not forget the case is equally strong when the apostle is on the way to Spain.

Tuesday, Forty-fourth Week, Romans 15:30-33.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; 31 that I may be delivered from them that are disobedient in Judea, and that my ministration which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints; 32 that I may come unto you in joy through the will of God, and together with you find rest. 33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

St. Paul asked for the prayers of the Roman Christians, not only on behalf of his preaching work, but on behalf of his benevolent, his social work at Jerusalem. He did not feel that the mere giving of money settled the case of the poor. There were other delicate elements in the

situation, besides the actual giving of money, which only the power of the Spirit could control.

And in our present-day social work the apostle has here a message for us. It is well that the work should be scientifically done, but even when that has been achieved there is sometimes a very strong sense on the part of workers that something is lacking. That there is need for a warmth, a spiritual power, back of all the excellent scientific administration and work in social service.

If more of our social work were baptized with more earnest prayer it might not only realize greater results, but it would provide spiritual atmosphere into which many more workers would be willing to go to work, who have been accustomed to such an atmosphere in all their labors, and without it they feel out of their true element.

Wednesday, Forty-fourth Week, Romans 16:1-16.

1 I commend unto you Phœbe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is at Cenchræ; 2 that ye receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever matter she may have need of you: for she herself also hath been a helper of many, and of mine own self.

3 Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles: 5 and salute the church that is in their house. Salute Epænetus my beloved, who is the firstfruits of Asia unto Christ. 6 Salute Mary, who bestowed much labor on you. 7 Salute Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also have been in Christ before me. 8 Salute Ampliatus my beloved in the Lord. 9 Salute Urbanus our fellow-worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. 10 Salute Apelles the approved in Christ. Salute them that are of the household of Aristobulus. 11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Salute them of the household of Narcissus, that are in the Lord. 12 Salute Tryphæna and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord. Salute Persis the beloved, who labored much in the Lord. 13 Salute Rufus the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. 14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brethren that are with them. 15 Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints that are with them. 16 Salute one another

with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you.

It is not within our province to discuss the question as to whether this chapter is part of the original epistle, which some contend it is not. It is distinctly according to the spirit of St. Paul to commend an individual worker to the fellowship, and helpful cooperation of the Church.

The apostle never lost sight of the individual in the midst of all the largeness of his outlook. And he never lost any opportunity to have the Kingdom advanced through the efforts of individuals. There would be fewer Christian workers, that backslide when they change their residence, if they were commended as Phœbe was commended to the local church. There are men and women who were useful servants of Christ and the church in one town who almost entirely dropped out of all Christian work when they went to reside in another town. It may or may not have been their fault. But the fact remains that there was a loss of service and a loss of spiritual power in the individual life.

Thursday, Forty-fourth Week, Romans 16:17-27.

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent. 19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I rejoice therefore over you: but I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple unto that which is evil. 20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

21 Timothy my fellow-worker saluteth you; and Lucias and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. 22 I Tertius, who write the epistle, salute you in the Lord. 23 Gaius my host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the treasurer of the city saluteth you, and Quartus the brother.

25 Now to him that is able to establish you according to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal, 26 but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith; 27 to the only wise

God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever. Amen.

As the years go and come a Christian dare not have lax views of the Christian life. There are severities in Christ as well as words of forgiving grace. The Christian life is not mere good nature. It may be that during this year there have been influences tolerated upon our lives which have not been for our good, that we have tolerated influences in our community which have been harmful, simply because we lacked the courage to deal with them. We felt it easier to let things drift than to protest. It was not so much the exercise of charity as the triumph of cowardice. The swift flight of time summons us to action. We must sometimes precipitate a crisis if the cause of Christ is in us, and the world is to be advanced. It is sometimes only in the exercise of the courage which a crisis demands that the grace of God has free course in us, and that the Christian messages of the epistle can really help us.

Heavenly Father, who by Thy grace hast revealed Thyself through Jesus Christ, give me the courage at this time to take whatever step Thy Spirit urges upon me to take. And as I am in the attitude of obedience, may Thy presence and power find no obstacle in me to the complete fulfilment of Thy will.

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